

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

PS 2964

Chap. Copyright No.

Shelf. S8C5

1889

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



CLUB ESSAYS.

CLUB ESSAYS

BY

DAVID SWING



NEW AND ENLARGED EDITION

CHICAGO
A. C. McCLURG AND COMPANY
1889

PS2964
S8C5
1889

COPYRIGHT
BY JANSEN, McCLURG AND CO.
A. D. 1880

COPYRIGHT
BY A. C. McCLURG AND CO.
A. D. 1889

TO THE
CHICAGO LITERARY CLUB,
THESE ESSAYS
ARE RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,
BY THE AUTHOR.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
I. AUGUSTINE AND HIS MOTHER,	11
II. A ROMAN HOME,	45
III. PARLEZ VOUS FRANCAIS?	89
IV. THE HISTORY OF LOVE,	127
V. THE GREATEST OF THE FINE ARTS,	161
VI. PLINY THE YOUNGER,	187
VII. OLYMPIA MORATA,	231

AUGUSTINE AND HIS MOTHER.

CLUB ESSAYS.

AUGUSTINE AND HIS MOTHER.

THE medical profession has long wished that the outer walls of some one human body at least might be made transparent, that those who attempt to cure ailments might be first permitted to see how the harp is made which they must keep in tune. Accidents have come to answer some part of this prayer, for pieces of the skull have been removed and the brain made visible, and the tearing away of the concealing veils has disclosed the throbbing heart and the expanding lungs. In the mental department of man the operations are behind heavy canopies and are largely unseen, and the wish of the medical leaders has often come to the students of spiritual modes, and mo-

tions and aims and ends. Burns thought much good would result if a man could see himself even as well as other people could see him; a Greek philosopher gratified a general feeling when he sighed forth the advice, "Know thyself," while Menander laughed at the imperfection of the advice, and declared it a more important attainment if one could know other people. "Murder will out," but this is not true of all the good and bad of human nature. Each soul lives and dies alone. It dwells in a dark room which no one enters. Saint Augustine comes nearest of all the great men of history to having lived and died in a transparent tenement. His soul tore down the heavy curtains and stood forth in full view. He saw himself in a manner so thorough that Burns himself must have felt that in our earth there was one man for whom his couplets were not composed.

Great as is the public aversion to an egotist,

each age is fortunate if it possesses one or two of these self-exhibitors, provided always that the man who thus loves to exhibit himself has any mental goods worthy of being spread out at an “opening.” Even in so prosaic and practical a matter as a county fair, a public display of produce and stock and manufactured articles implies the superior quality of the things shown ; and when the exposition is a National one held at Paris or at Novgorod, it is assumed that all the fabrics and jewels and wonders are of a very high order of merit. When an egotist comes along to set forth his own deeds and thoughts and beliefs, to put his own exploits in a magic lantern, and throw them out upon a canvass for our benefit, he in the meanwhile making the accompanying remarks and turning out the music, it is demanded simply that he has some exploits and scenes worthy of his time and our own, and of the complicated machines for ex-

hibiting. Fortunate the generation which has grown for its own use one of these glass-clear souls, having at once an experience rich and full, and an anxiety to tell the whole story. Montaigne is to-day a picture of a French half century—a picture made up of interesting details, which must have escaped the more grave historian; but more fortunate still was the fourth Christian century in the possession of such an open mind as *Aurelius Augustine*.

He alleges as an excuse for writing his “Confessions” his desire to do good; but it is pretty well known that such a desire generally springs up in hearts not averse to self-utterance, and that the two desires of saving souls and pleasing one’s self are for the most part combined in all these personal records. But the end justified the means, for in this autobiography the nineteenth century possesses a truthful picture of the Christian landscape as it lay fourteen hundred years ago. Doctrines

and customs, smiles and tears, mothers, wives and mistresses, studies and prayers, truths and falsehoods, chimeras and absurdities and verities, are clothed with all the realism and interest which attend the drama of actual personage. Augustine possesses the double virtue of being the mirror of a whole generation, and of a generation so far removed from our own that each article displayed seems an antique or a charming novelty.

It shows the religious quality of the early Christian faith that Augustine's autobiography is addressed to God. In those days the Deity had not fallen into the hands of our Darwins and Mills and Harriet Martineaus, but He was a near friend—a companion of each soul. God was as absolute a reality as was the city of Rome or the Mediterranean sea, and the early Christians enjoyed as many conferences with God as they enjoyed with each other. To this real but invisible One cases of con-

science and of doubt were referred as to a magistrate who could not err, and, in a word, the Creator of the universe was the special friend and confidant of all who passed over from the pagan to the Christian faith. When Augustine had fallen into deep perplexity over a question of duty, he resolved to open the Bible at random and then mark what verse the Lord should first disclose to his eyes. Thus was he led from his darkness out into the supreme light, and so effective was this form of appeal that both Augustine and his bosom friend Alypius were richly blessed by a passage which contained a peculiar teaching for each one of the inseparable companions. That is, the appeal to ‘random’ was so full of success that the applicant had light to spare to his neighbor. Living in such a period, good Christians talked to God as they walked along the roads or as they journeyed by boat or litter, and when the subject of this sketch felt

that the human family should see his inmost heart, he simply began to write down his talks with his Maker. This evidently secures for the book great sincerity and frankness, for there is seldom a heart so depraved that it can address a series of falsehoods to the Almighty. The probability is that in these "Confessions" we have a picture of a heart in the fourth century, as it lived and loved and hated and wept. It smiled but little.

Should any modern mind possess the child-like simplicity that would tell all things to the public, we should have a grotesque collection, for thoughts are largely involuntary, and they come pell-mell, red, white and blue and black and gray. Judgment selects from this awful mixture and chaos a few things that seem worthy of utterance. Clergymen while speaking in the pulpit have their own thoughts about certain toilets and faces down in the pews, and along with their argument, that

might seem to prove the existence of heaven or hell, they cannot avoid the reflection that Mrs. Oleander has gotten a new shawl, or that Miss Columbine has returned from Europe or Long Branch ; but the rules of public address demand that from this multiplicity of ideas in the brain, a judicious selection should be made by the speaker, and that in his assumed discourse on some theological theme he must suppress his views about Mrs. Oleander and Miss Columbine. To Saint Augustine it generally seemed otherwise. He opens the windows of his heart and lets all things escape. He mingles into one not displeasing compound, God and Æneas and Dido, and wonders that when so easily able to weep for Dido slain he should have been so slow to weep for himself or for his God. He asks the Almighty why he hated Homer and was fond of Virgil ? He informs the Lord that when a lad of fifteen he was wont to steal, and in

proof of the assertion he cites an instance in which he had entered a garden to divest a pear tree of its coming crop. “*Nor cared I to enjoy what I stole, but I joyed in the theft and sin itself.* A pear tree there was near our vineyard laden with fruit, tempting neither for color nor taste. To shake and rob this some lewd young fellows of us went late one night (having according to our pestilent custom prolonged our sports in the streets till then), and took huge loads, not for our eating, but to fling to the very hogs, having only tasted them. And this we did only because we loved to do that which was not lawful! Behold my heart, O, God! behold my heart, upon which Thou hadst pity as it lay in the bottom of the bottomless pit.” A statement this which places before us the boys of the Roman world as they were fifteen hundred years ago; how they made the streets noisy with their games and midnight a witness of their dusky forms as they

clambered over wall or fence; a statement which informs us that hogs ran free and hungry in the classic streets, and which recalls to mind the fact that the cooks of the period threw their kitchen-slops out of the front window saying, "*Beware*" to the passer-by.

In this wonderful *pot pourri*, there comes more of the beautiful than of the grotesque or ridiculous, and as a general rule the thoughts of the Saint flow along, much as do the meditations of a' Kempis and Richard Baxter. Almost all the leading doctrines of the Christian system, come under review, and the virtues and vices of Christians of the period are seen in the general parade. From the fact that each Christian felt that his God or his Saviour was always just at hand, the prevailing tone of religion was personal and spiritual. It was not a philosophy, but an experience. In our day Christianity among the educated is an intellectual platform of piety,

just as republicanism or democracy is a platform of politics; but in the time of Saint Augustine, it was an experience, just as love or friendship is an experience of the soul. The sins of this olden time were more the sins of ignorance than of intention, and therefore the heart which committed them was often all the while a faithful friend of the Most High. Modern Christians are few who would write down such expressions as “too late have I loved Thee, O Thou Beauty of ancient days! yet ever new! too late have I loved Thee!” “Oh Thou sweetness never failing; Thou blissful and assured sweetness.” “When shall I see Thee, Oh Thou most dear, most loving, most benign, most precious, most longed for, most lovable, most beautiful, than honey sweeter, than snow or milk whiter, than nectar more delicious; more valuable than all gold or gems, than all the riches and honors of the earth dearer!” Even could such meditations find

their way into the modern mind, they would die on the lips that should attempt to give them audible utterance. Coming in the writings of this old Saint, they tell us not only what a passionate belief filled the soul of the writer but also the souls of the public, for each writer adapts his language to his age. We are thus assured that in the fourth century, the profession of faith in Christ was a declaration of love, and that for him language summoned its best adjectives, and the heart poured out its best tears. The kissing of the feet, and the wiping of them with the long hair of woman, as seen in Magdalen, is seen over again in these pages, the actions of the beautiful woman being spiritualized in the literature of a gifted man.

Explanatory of the emotion of both Mary Magdalen and Saint Augustine, it must be observed that our Anglo-Saxon civilization is, perhaps, the coldest one the world has yet

known. No Southern or Eastern land has ever equalled England and America in the ability and disposition to suppress emotion. Our greetings on the street and in social life are formal and empty, compared with even those of modern Germany and France and Italy, and when compared with the customs of the early centuries of our era, they fade as poor frost-bitten flowers. Whether the difference is not one of emotion so much as one of expression, is a question of value, but it is with outward symbols we are now dealing, and regarding these it must be declared that the forms of revealing regard are in our land comparatively cold and thin. German men who are friends or relatives, often kiss each other and weep when they separate for a long period, thus showing us that there once flowed northward a wave of demonstrativeness from the land of hot hearts, and that that wave, now dying out on the German shore, was high and full when Aug-

ustine was living his intense years. His was a time of full utterance. Language was taxed to its uttermost, and gesture and rite and tears came to supplement the resources of the Latin and Greek tongues. Be the person loved a girl, a wife, a mother, or the Savior or the Creator, the mind always ransacked the prevailing language for words that would come somewhere near conveying an idea of the heart's attachment. The demand added to the supply, and those southeastern tongues all became powerful in their terms of praise and endearment —a power which was inherited by the modern dialects of western Europe.

One of the forms of interest and utility with which these “Confessions” abound, is the conspicuous place occupied by the mother of the remarkable son. Monica is a prominent figure in this passion-play. While it is probable that she does not represent the average wife and mother of that world, yet it is desira-

ble to know what merit and maternal love and wisdom were possible and occasional in a time so far removed from our own. It is a blessed sight to behold such a wife standing forth upon the dark back-ground of classic and ancient customs, and to see a mother so loved by a great son in a day when the father was the chief personage in the house, and when the mother was only a domestic slave. Divorce was frequent and easy. The mother was liable at any time to be banished from her home and separated from her children. When mindful of these cruelties of antiquity we shall read the history of Monica as one of antiquity's brightest pages.

Monica was a Numidian girl. Her country corresponded to the modern Algiers. It was adjacent to Carthage, and hence enjoyed the influence of that illustrious city. For several centuries Carthage and Alexandria had been the successors of Greece and of intellectual

Rome. The military and political power of Rome were on the northern border of the Mediterranean ; on the southern border were her literature and libraries. The new religion followed the intellectual parallels and made a grand conquest of the Alexandrian and African Romans. Tagaste, a town in Numidia, the first home of Augustine, must have sustained toward Carthage such relations as all towns are wont to sustain toward this metropolis ; so that Monica, a girl in Numidia, must have enjoyed such an education and general culture as she would have received had she passed her girlhood in the larger city of greater fame. Among other teachings she drank in fully the cup of Christianity, as it was handed along in that part of our era. That she accepted of it as the true and only message from God to man may be inferred from the fact that her heart revealed an intense fear lest her promising son might not find that

path of service and safety. Her zeal followed this child with prayers and tears until she saw her dear one, at the age of thirty, pass over from paganism to the tenets of the Gospels. She made long journeys to visit Augustine and plead with him, and his record of this faithful pursuing from city to city shows that her visits were not meddlesome, and as is often the case full of mortification for proud youths who have outgrown the parental wisdom, but they were as the visits of a true love ; and even when her arguments were not convincing they were all welcome to the affectionate son. It is well that in the lives of three most illustrious personages—Christ and Aurelius and Augustine—the nearest being to each one was the mother ! Not always in our world does the crown of affection rest upon the right forehead.

In Monica we may see the traces of the customary bondage of the wife, which, next to the

slavery of men, has disgraced the past of humanity. What exact quality of a husband this Numidian woman found is not told us, but that he possessed the prevailing low ideas of a wife is fully evinced by the inquiry which her women-friends raised—how it happened that, having been a wife so long, she had no marks on her face and body of blows received in the ordinary experience of married life? We can paint a picture here. A half-dozen wives have met, perhaps, at a common resort on the sea, and while sitting idly together in the afternoon, their husbands being absent on a fishing or tippling or theological excursion, these wives fall into a free discourse about the scars and wounds on their bodies. One has a slightly broken nose; one has lost a couple of front teeth; one has a long scar on her cheek; one has a mark over an eye; but upon looking toward Monica to note which of these marriage certificates she may possess, they find none,

and then she explains to them that for years she has made no answer to scoldings, and has in such an adroit manner studied silence and conciliation that she has escaped blows with club or rod, and has received words only, and they leave no scar. Other of the wives then tell what it was that made their lordly husband administer the blow under contemplation. No one of these women sigh for sorrow at the remembrance of such violence, for such sighing would imply that in their hearts was slumbering some delicate ideal of domestic love. No one of them, not even Monica, could recall a time when a husband had put any flowers in her hair, or had kissed her in presence of guests, but easily can they remember that Paul has said that wives must obey their husbands, and that Xenophon has said that if a wife wants exercise let her fold and arrange all the clothes. And yet in a day when all customs tended to dwarf the wife and the mother, Monica flour-

ished and triumphed under the marriage-roof, and attached her children to her in bonds of love that would be thought very powerful, even in our age.

And yet this very wife who had managed affairs so well, did not fully realize, in the abstract, the sphere of wife or mother, for the terms are mutually explanatory. Nor had she or her husband or her son a moral sense that would compare favorably with the highest moral ideas of modern Christianity. These two defects will appear in the fact that this Christian woman rather opposed the marriage of her son, and did not battle so bravely to persuade her gifted boy to give up his unlawful mistress as to give up his paganism. Even so pious and devoted a mother could not take in the whole circle of the new morality, but splendid as she was, she had one foot back upon the borders of the dark land. She was anxious for her child to escape to Christ, not

dreaming that she had not herself fully come to his moral hight. To all this truly noble Christian group marriage appeared as the attribute of man as an animal, and therefore between mistress and wife the difference did not seem remarkable. The long and great struggle of Augustine to find some light in this matter came largely from the power of long customs and from the low general estimate of woman. When at last thirty-three years had brought him some reason and the power to put away the temporary friend, he did not make a wife of her, who had been all things to him, faithfully for years, and was the mother of the beautiful Adeodatus, but discarding her, he begins to talk with God about matrimony, and prays for a wife that may bring him some money, and may thus add to his happiness without adding to the family expense. Thus throughout this domestic group there is visible more of piety than of intelli-

gence. As a child can have emotions, but only old age have wisdom, so the infancy of a religion may possess faith and zeal, while the delicate perception of right and wrong waits the slow coming of thought and experience.

At last by her pleadings with her family and at the throne of mercy, Monica led her son and husband and some of the nearest relatives and friends over from the old religion to the new. This transformation took place at Milan. Milan being then a rival of Rome in material and intellectual greatness, being full of the "pomp and circumstance of Kings," the wish sprang up in the hearts of these new converts to return to Africa, and for a time enjoy the meditation and spiritual luxury of solitude. Along with all these early conversions came a contempt of the world. The early Christians loved a solitude because they thought that the absence of man secured the presence of God. Having found Christ the

heart sought a hidden room or a cave in the rocks or a trackless forest, that it might see only its Savior.

In obedience to this philosophy, Augustine and his mother set forth for the coast. Loved attendants followed. They came to the well known port of Ostia, and as nobody was ever in haste in that epoch, and as all these travelers were weary from their overland trip, they determined to spend a few days or perhaps weeks at this old town by the sea. The Mediterranean tempered the winds which came from the southern region, while the mountains cooled those that came from the north. On one of these peaceful days the son and the mother were standing, and leaning out of a large window which looked out upon a blossoming garden and a serene sky. The scene and the rapture of their hearts brought these strange lovers a theme of discourse. They began to wonder what would be the nature of

that world which should come beyond the earthly flowers, and the blue sky of these days; to wonder with what kind of sweetness that life would begin, and with what rich employment proceed in its endlessness. Picture for painter, this son aged thirty-three, and this mother aged fifty-six, hand in hand like lovers looking out of a window, and with upturned faces attempting to see beyond the curtains of eternity. The vision and thoughts were too rich. They expelled from the mother's bosom the beloved Africa, and made her soul long for a holier rest than any along the shores of the sea that now murmured at her feet. "My son why should I stay longer in this world? I have seen my household all converted from darkness to light, and now why might I not wish to go to the world where my Lord dwells?" While Monica thus talked, the change of worlds was coming silently.

In a few days after this conference, which

will remind the reader of the similar discourses which Aurelius and his mother held in pagan words, Augustine was summoned to his mother's room. She had fainted away in a fever. In our day there are fevers which seem to touch the mind before they are perceived in the body. The door-bell is heard to ring, and persons are heard to call one's name, when no one has rung and no one has spoken ; tears of memory fill the eyes ; the present seem absent or the absent seem to have come home. The victim of these deceptions feels bewildered, but often laughs at the cheats. In a few days the rapid development of a fever explains the strange action of the mind. It may be that when in the far off times this beautiful mother stood by that window, which has long since decayed, and looked out over the garden whose trees are now dead, a malarial fever touched her mind with its chilling shadow, and made her heart wish to fly away

and be at rest. She heard music and voices not of earth. She seemed to see a land sweeter than the one held by the arms of the Romans or by the literature of the Greeks. In a few days the fever had made unconscious the mind which had filled years with its prayers and reasonings and love. But reason returned long enough to permit this noble woman to reveal one more color of her loneliness—a deep humility—for she requested her son not to move her body to her home, but to bury her at Ostia and to hold a service full of simplicity—beyond that he must remember her always before the altars of God.

The events which followed this dying scene, cast some light upon the services of that period. The neighbors began to pour into the house where the dead woman lay, and some one began to chant a psalm, and all the house-full began to make responses, thus showing us that the music and general service of the fourth cent-

ury was much like that of the Episcopal Church of the present. The funeral was without lamentations, not even tears being thought proper, for the soul had gone to a better land, and therefore, said Augustine, they attempted to conceal or prevent expressions of sorrow. The distinguished son himself, having invited the company into a room removed from the one where friends were preparing the body for burial, delivered an address to them "upon themes befitting the time," thus incidentally teaching us that Christianity had robbed the grave of victory, and death of its sting, and had enabled a son to contemplate peacefully a dead face, which, living, had been his inexpressible joy.

A portion of the dying request of Monica has led to some discussions among theologians. She asked to be remembered at the Lord's altar wherever the living son might be. Roman Catholic writers cite this request and the

obedience of Augustine, as proof that prayers for the dead have the authority of the early church. Dr. Shedd, of the Presbyterian denomination, urges that no such inference can be drawn from such an incident, but there is no space here for either side of the debate. In my opinion the dying mother asked her son to pray for her always and, in my opinion, the son was true to the request ; but the force of such praying for the dead is all taken away by the fact that both Augustine and his mother did many things not worthy of imitation by any subsequent generation. If all things, the early Christians did may become a basis of church law and practice, then nothing is more useless than human habits of thought and progress. Augustine thought that singing in church had a tendency to exalt music above God. To confess the simple facts of history and then deny their value as an example, would seem more rational than to

resort to the method of Dr. Shedd which appears to be only a piece of theological trifling. Monica asked to be remembered in the family petitions, which should be offered up after she had passed away ; Augustine went to the altar and prayed for his dead parent and his prayer is all written down. Such facts leave no room for Protestant quibble, neither do they afford any basis of the Roman doctrine and practice, for the Romanists assume that what an old Saint did, becomes church doctrine, and they further assume that by prayers for the dead, they can for money, lift a soul from purgatory. Augustine's prayer was not made for money, nor under any assumption of power, not by a third party having only official relations to the departed soul ; but it was an outpouring of love, a strewing of lilies upon a tomb, a remembrance not official by a priest, but solemn and private by a lonely bereaved heart. If the Roman Catholic Church should

teach her men, young and old, who may lose a wise and affectionate mother, to repair often to her grave and there pray to Heaven to make more and more blessed her stay among the angels, and to help them obey the holy words she had taught them, prayers for the dead would be less objectionable, for they would seem to be only the efforts of human affection to carry on its loving intercourse across the valley of death. It is possible that the Protestant notion is as much too cold and iron like as the Roman doctrine is too pretentious and mercenary. It may be that in the cold North, cold by climate and cold by philosophy, death is permitted to cause too absolute a separation between husband and wife, brother and sister, mother and child. It might perhaps be permitted the weeping heart standing on the earthly shore to cast out toward the invisible realm, prayers for those who have gone away, and to cherish the hope

that those absent ones were also presenting in their better land, petitions for the happiness and salvation of the dear ones left in this life of temptation and suffering. For such rationalizing, for such sifting of opinion, Augustine and his mother did not wait. For thirty-three years this mother and son had given and received love; had exchanged thoughts upon all possible subjects; had held hands as though two lovers or two little children, and when death came to the parent, the friendship of the son did not cease, but its words became prayers and were flung out into the spiritual world by an impassioned soul.



A ROMAN HOME.

A ROMAN HOME.

A LETTER TO HIS FRIEND XIMINES, FROM TIRO, A SLAVE OF CICERO.

DEAR XIMINES:

I AM still near the spot where my master was murdered. I am in his deserted library, and from a place so full of sacred memory, I must now write to you a long letter with the long promised grave and light particulars about this greatest of the Romans. As though you were a woman, you beg to know all about the house and the wife and the children, and even the table and the entire private life of this orator. The wish is well enough; because you can thus compare Rome with Athens. Your wish shall be gratified in part, for the cruel death of my kind master only last week renders sacred even the small things that now come up to notice or to memory.

Even this double inkstand, with black ink in one side and red ink in the other, recalls the dead, for it is the very one which my Cicero shook up when he said he must write more distinctly to his brother Quintus.

Does it seem so to you? but I have indeed been the secretary and librarian of this Roman for twenty years. You remember that when I was a mere lad in Athens and was being taught the two great languages and all letters that I might be a literary slave to some of the Athenians, Cicero, who was then in our city to study rhetoric with old Demetrius, formed quite an attachment to me, and hoped to call me some day to Rome. Twenty years have now passed since he sent for me and paid my former master a large sum for his literary slave, Tiro.

That you may know how light my bondage for these years has been, and how well qualified I am to speak about his domestic life, I must

insert an extract here from the almost daily letters which Cicero sent me when he was absent, and when I was sick at Tusculum.

“I did not imagine, dear Tiro, that I should have been so little able to bear your absence, but indeed it is almost beyond endurance. Should you embark immediately you would overtake me at Leucas. But if you are inclined to defer your voyage till your recovery shall be more confirmed, let me entreat you to be careful in selecting a safe ship, and be careful that you sail in good weather, and not without a convoy. It is true I am extremely desirous of your company, and as early as possible, but the same affection which makes me wish to see you soon, makes me wish to see you well.”

And I must add here, lest I forget it, that my master never struck men or scolded me, nor did he ever treat any of his slaves with any cruelty. Some of the Romans do indeed abuse

their servants, and one matron recently ordered one of her dressing maids put to death because she arranged badly, or made some error in the toilet of her mistress, but I never saw any such inhumanity in the house of my great master. I must insert here an extract from another letter :

“ I dispatched a letter to you from this place yesterday, where I continued all day waiting for my brother, and this I write just as we are setting out, and before sunrise. If you have any regard for us, but particularly for me, show it by your care to re-establish your health. It is with great impatience I expect to meet you at Leucas; but if that cannot be, my next wish is that I may find Mario there with a letter. We all, but more particularly myself, long to see you ; however, we would by no means, dear Tiro, indulge ourselves in that pleasure unless it may be consistent with your health. I can forego your assistance,

but your health, my dear Tiro, I would love to see restored, partly for your own sake—partly for mine. Farewell."

ALYZIA Nov., 5 A. M. 703.

Such kind letters he continually wrote me, and so many, that now I have quite a number of them, and how valuable they are, since they make me feel not that I passed long years of painful servitude with such a man, but instead, long years of elevating companionship.

When coming hither, so many years ago, on reaching the harbor nearest the Formian Villa, I found on the shore quite a crowd of people and an assortment of conveyances, much like those we have at home; there were carriages for those who had furthest to go; there were litters for those who lived only a few stadia over the hills. I inquired for the house of Cicero, and was pointed to a man as being the good Roman himself. In a plain but ele-

gant litter sat my future master. In another elegant one with embroidered curtains, sat his wife Terentia Cicero, and the little daughter Tullia. These litters were resting on their wooden braces, while the sixteen slaves, whose business it was to carry them, were lounging around in the sun, almost every one of them having his hand full of ripe figs at which he was munching cheerfully. Cicero had come partly to meet me, but partly from the custom the rich families have of going to the harbor, when they see a vessel coming in. This great Roman Demosthenes seemed glad to meet me, and as we went home, I walked along-side his litter, and as the curtains were looped up, he talked all the while in a most elegant manner. He found me quite familiar with recent and old books, and at each discovery that I could speak both Latin and Greek correctly, his face brightened.

I then thought him a very homely man.

He was thin and pale, and his neck was very long. When he reached over the rail to look forward or back, his neck seemed long as that of a crane. But amid the beauty of his character, the plainness of his person passed away. Terentia seemed cold and unbending and did not so much as speak to me, but Tullia, the little daughter, called out to me to ask if I would not help her get out her lessons in Greek.

Did you know, Ximines, that the wealthy Romans do not limit themselves to one country place? In addition to a costly city residence, my master had fourteen villas for his summer or winter pleasure. Wherever an island or a harbor or a hill, especially pleased him, he bought or built a house, and several places were given him by wealthy friends, who were or might be his clients in law, or who were moved by simple friendship. Many large sums were given to this lawyer in the wills of those who had been near him in life.

Happy summers we spent sailing or journeying to and fro among these beautiful places of rest. The Tusculum Villa was the favorite of us all, and the chief of the group. It was in the border of Rome. From it we could see all the public buildings in the one direction and all the beauty of hill and vale and water and sky in another. Here were our library, our pictures, our statuary, our best gardens and fields, our fowls, geese, ducks, pheasants, peacocks and pigeons. My master's city residence was costly, and was wonderful in its ornaments and apartments, but we all loved more the resort out at Tusculum. That city home, Clodius, the consul, in the depth of malice, ordered to be razed to the ground when he banished Cicero. For days the mob and also the better people could be seen carrying off fragments or ornaments or plunder from that overthrown palace. But a change of consuls soon came and Rome recalled the exile and rebuilt our city house.

Our Tusculum villa is built much like a general's camp, the soul being in the centre, the body, the *impedimenta*, being located all around the valuable part. The main hall of villa is the soul. Here is the conversation, here the beauty, here the feast, here the art, here the whole family. All around are the shops and sleeping bunks of the servants. This villa is approached through a long lane of dwarf box. This accommodating shrub is trimmed and bent into the shapes of animals in a pretty or grotesque manner. Rampant lions and the panther so much seen in the games, the peacock and other birds are on either hand as you approach the main entrance of the house. The structure measures about a hundred feet across the front and extends back fully two hundred feet. The exterior is set apart for rooms for the artisan slaves. Our carpenter has one, our tailor one, our groom one, our cook one, and thus on until the

the family is in the midst of quite an army of these domestic troops. Like almost all the Roman houses it is built of brick, but some parts of it are lined with marble. But Rome is a brick city, the bricks being about one span square. Entering this large square by a beautiful gate, you are passed inward by the keepers, and after a few steps you come into the large hall, which is the home of the Cicero family. Marble columns support the roof, which is raised high above the head. Marble is under foot. All around one stands statuary, most of which come from Greek towns. The side walls are made of stucco, and these are exquisitely painted. To the height of a man above the floor, the colors are dark, and the figures are set ones, but above that the colors are very bright and the figures either perfect vines and flowers, or else images of human and divine ideals. In this immense room we ate and talked, and

played and laughed, and gave parties, and danced and were happy, until death entered the gate to break up this island of the blessed. In some Roman houses in the city there are steps to lead up to a second story, but this is rarely the case. The bed-chambers are recesses from the great hall and sometimes there is one sleeping berth above another, and the one who sleeps above climbs up by two pins inserted in the masonry.

At Tusculum, my master had a bed-room made for himself in the rear of the building. He had ordered deadened walls on all sides, and a window that he could darken ; that when he had been up late at night he might not be disturbed by that clatter of all kinds made by the slaves, nor be awakened by the too obtrusive sunshine of the morning.

The library was a room with the walls on all sides arranged for books. Each book had its little cell, like the holes in which our pigeons

live. It was not my place to take care of the volumes, but to read them to my master and to his family and friends; and to be forever seeking for new truths or ideas or beauties for the great orator's happiness and use. He had a slave who looked after the binding and dusting and arranging of the works. Cicero would not permit a dirty cover to remain on a volume, nor a soiled label. All must be bright and cheerful, much as the good man was himself. One set of books he had such as I never saw at Athens—books full of portraits. He had seven hundred portraits of distinguished Romans. As Brutus and Cæsar had the same pictures in their libraries, I concluded and heard that there was some shop where one picture could be multiplied until all could have copies; but I have not yet found that ingenious shop.

Our library is ornamented in fine manner by paintings and statuary. Now I remember

how mad my master was, when, having ordered Atticus to buy him some good pieces in Greece, that erring friend shipped to us a lot of cupids and nymphs. My master did not want such stuff in his rooms.

Passing out of the library, one comes to the flower-garden and fish-ponds and poultry-yard. How much that great Cicero did love his geese and peacocks and chickens and pigeons ! Even when he knew he must make an important speech that day, and when he was full of care about the oration, he would yet take the time in the morning to go out and see how the pigeons and pheasants were getting along. I have known him to pay a large sum for two pigeon's eggs that he heard would hatch out some rare species. In the flower-garden and among the fruit trees, the dinner and supper were often served in the summer months. I often read aloud while the family ate. I loved thus to read, for the grass under foot secured

for us such a silence that reading and hearing were more delightful.

Permit me now to rest you a little, dear Ximenes, by leading you from the small to the great, for you know, dear friend, the soul is so constructed that it can find rest in going from the little to the large, or from the large to the little. Man can walk a circle with less fatigue if at times he changes his direction. Let me tell you about Cicero as a student and an orator. He was wider in his taste than our Demosthenes. You know our orator loved only matters of State, but this Roman loved all books and all things. He read everything he could find. If I found a good passage I went to him with it, perfectly assured that he would enjoy it whether it was prose or poetry, or law or religion or geography, or only a piece for exciting laughter. In one way or another, all he saw or heard or read, helped him in either his public speeches or in his

conversations. All that went into his brain came out again in some better shape. He will live in the world's fame as an orator, but I shall remember with deepest pleasure his fun and talk at home. Every evening friends came in. There were Trebatius and Hortensius and Atticus and Rufus and Brutus and Cato, and by degrees my master would become aroused, and all evening long he would pour forth jokes and anecdotes or else would quote gems from the poets. He was a mimic of manners and would keep all delighted by mimicing all the bad and eccentric speakers of the city and the clowns of the day. Grave as my master was in his public addresses, he filled some of his letters to friends and sometimes the rooms of justice and always our home, with sayings that led to much laughter and much good cheer. In all the letters he wrote to the young lawyer, Trebatius, who had gone with Cæsar on his British expedition, there were seldom

any words except those of pure humor. He expressed in one of them the opinion that his friend had gone over the sea, that he might be the greatest lawyer now living *in Britain*. In another he opines that the reason why his friend had remained carefully away from battle, could not be found in any cowardice, but it must have been in the unwillingness of a student of law to be *guilty of making an assault*. In one of the replies of Trebatius, there were signs that some former writing had been erased to leave the page blank for the letter to Cicero. In the next missile to this absent friend, Cicero expressed a wonder what could have been on that paper that could have made it less valuable than the proposed letter—he concluded that what was erased “must have been one of your own (Tribatius’) briefs.”

When Verres was upon trial for defrauding the people of Sicily, for stealing statuary and

jewels and pictures, and for assessing and collecting most unjust taxes, Hortensius defended, and Cicero prosecuted the accused. It was known to my master that Verres had sent to his attorney a valuable piece of marble—an Egyptian Sphynx. In the course of the examination of witnesses, Hortensius became angry at one of those on the side of the prosecution, and thundered out that he wanted no riddles but a plain statement of facts. Cicero said calmly, “Hortensius, you should be glad to get a supply of riddles since you have at home such a valuable sphynx.” This quite upset the gravity of the crowd, and all laughed over the predicament of the distinguished Hortensius.

There was a form of literary sport which was my master’s great delight—a double use of a word; a use in which the hidden import would suddenly spring up bringing always a pleasure. These double-edged words he loved

to send off to this same fun-loving Trebatius. He reminded him that the winters would be cold up in Gaul, but that his *regimentals*, when they should come, would keep out much cold; and that Cæsar would perhaps have some *hot* work for him; and that upon the whole he was not so hopeless as a soldier as he was as a lawyer. Trebatius having remained on the peaceful side of a river while Cæsar went over to fight, Cicero congratulated the friend that he had so far eliminated all ill-will from his heart that he had become unwilling to cross water !!!

Indeed I shall not deny that to see the house-tops covered with people and the streets densely crowded with a multitude, all silent to hear Cicero speak against the cruel Verres, or the despot Antony, was a great spectacle and one which it was my fortune often to witness, but, for some reason, my own memory will cherish most those evenings in the villas when

the jokes were so good and all were so perfectly happy. Julius Cæsar at one time determined to gather up in a little volume, all the Cicero stories and witticisms he could find, but I fear that the last five years of Cæsar's life were passed in so much war and turmoil that he never prosecuted his intention. At none of the bookstores do I find any such volume. I need no such volume, but the laughing world will.

My master spoke much like the orators we have seen and heard in Athens. He imitated and he acted as he spoke. He threw himself about from place to place on the rostrum and seemed to have in him the souls of a whole company of men. When he first began speaking in public, he was so full of action and passion that he injured his health and was compelled to leave Rome and seek peace abroad. He spoke just as do the actors in the theaters changing his face and voice to

suit each style of the changing thought and argument. He had an extreme ambition and seemed to know in youth that he was destined to be great. When he entered the law some wanted him to change his name, for Cicero meant only a vegetable. They told him it did not sound large enough. He said in reply that he would keep his father's name and make it sound honorable. He wore out his health in a few years and sailed to Greece for rest. On his return, he assumed a manner a little more quiet but it was still very full of action. But, my good friend, he was a wonderful man. I always attended him when he was to make a speech that when he came to write it out fully afterward, I could aid him if he had lost any particular thought or the structure of a sentence. I have known the lawyers opposed in a case to my master to venture no reply but to abandon their cause after Cicero had made his opening speech.

A rather amusing event took place while Cæsar was dictator, only a few years ago. A case was before Cæsar. The evidence having been all taken, Cæsar was about to give his judgment and had declared that no speeches need be made as his mind had been made up fully that the person charged was guilty. Cicero arose to make a brief voluntary plea. Cæsar said jokingly that he had not heard Cicero for so long that it would be rather pleasant to hear the good fellow speak once again. He heard him; got amazed and highly wrought up, and discharged the accused as being the most innocent man of his acquaintance.

Ah, my Ximines, let me tell you more now of the home life of the dead orator and master, more dear to me as a master than as an orator. Let me tell you briefly about the social scenes in our city house, and also in the Villa at Tusculum. One of our largest reunions of

friends was given when Cicero's only daughter Tullia had just begun to attract the attentions of Roman lovers. As soon as night had fully come the friends began to pour in. Some came by carriages, some by the popular litter. At last you could have seen gathered in the hall Julius Cæsar and his wife; Decimus Brutus and Marcus Brutus, Cato, Hortensius, Marcus Antony, Crassus, Quintus Cicero, the brother of my Marcus, Pompey and Publius, Crassus Atticus, Casca, and a hundred other such notable men. Not any less was the number of the noble women and maidens. Pomponia, the wife of Cicero's brother, came early and had begun to chat with her sister-in-law. Corelia, the daughter of Metellus Scipio, was there dressed in plain, but rich costume, for she was a woman of intellect rather than of dress. She resembled the Cornelia of Gracchi fame. The Lælia girls were present in all their style of costume and beauty of face.

In this throng were not a few of the Roman “*pretty men*,” *homo bellus*. There were three Laelia girls and they might have stood for three graces. The talk that Cicero thought too highly of these daughters was all old time gossip. The *bellus homo* is a man wholly devoted to fashion and dress and pleasure. The number of these has greatly increased of late years. The younger men in general seem to be of this sleek and effeminate school. The sons of the great Senators and orators are for the most part idle, pretty men, who part their hair with the utmost precision and smell of all the perfumes of the South. They wear snow-white robes, and powder like women to make white their bare arms ; and in the wearing of rings they equal any matron of this dying Republic. These youths gathered that night in one corner of the great hall, and with a few equally silly girls they hummed over part of Nile love songs, and lounged in the

large soft seats designed for the ladies of rank.

Most of the love songs here locate their scenes of romance and the actors in the scenes over on the Nile; not only because Cleopatra has introduced there an era of sentiment, but rather because the spirit of romance always finds its ideal land away from home, there being no witchery in things that are near. I remember that we boys at Athens sang of Roman adventure, but coming hither I found the Roman young souls locating the exploits of successful and unsuccessful love as far as possible away from all existing realities. It must belong to human nature to cover up with enchantment hills and vales and peoples that are just beyond the eye's field of vision.

At times I heard some elegant measures from some thoughtful poet, but for the most part these brainless youths sang little verses of which I may give you here a fair sample:

If you would live your life
In the light of woman's smile
And escape all toil and strife
Then away to the Nile!

There my barge may float all night
On the love-creating stream
Where the soft and amber light
Changes life into a dream.

My love is in the boat
And I am by her side;
Oh, let me ever float
On this love-producing tide.

In Rome at all hours of the night one can hear some part of this shape of song rising up from the streets, and so fully alive is the whole city to the romance of love affairs, that even old men whistle these tunes as they plod along to work or to idleness, generally to idleness, for none but slaves pursue any toilsome occupation.

Of this trifling class was Cicero's son Marcus. At least while away in Greece at school, word often came to us that he was living in a dissipated manner and was spending much more money than had been allowed him. But not of this foolish class was the daughter Tullia.

She resembled her father in her love of learning and of wise conversation, and thus when our parties were given this beautiful girl was found talking with Cæsar or Pollio or Archias, rather than with the fops at the other end of the corridor. Had I not been only a servant, it would have been an immeasurable joy could I have sought and gained her love. As things were, I confess, my dear Ximines, my heart beat quickly with happiness when she would request me to bring her a certain volume and read for the company, at her command, some sentiment that had given her delight. My partiality, perhaps, made me admire her dress more than the magnificent toilet of Cæsar's wife or the gay attire of the Laelia daughters. On this particular evening Tullia wore over her wine-colored dress a delicately tinted pink scarf which quite enfolded her. It had a still brighter border. Her hair was heaped up rather negligently on her head,

and was held in place by a gold arrow. As she played on the harp and sang, she showed a sandal with a rim of gold all around the sole, and a perfect network of pearls covering the instep of her almost sacred foot. Add to these ornaments a golden ball which she would at times toss to some, and from which would gush forth a little cloud of perfumed dust, and you can see this loved and now wept-for Tullia. I used to wonder what the great father would have said or done had I ever taken by the hand that beautiful being, or had I ever addressed a note of affection to her. Now that both are dead I am glad that my insane love never ventured forth in formal language.

On this evening we had for the feast all the fish and fowls and fruits known to Roman or Greek, and the most elegant wines. Cicero loved glassware with quite a passion, and his engraved goblets passed freely about, filled with their nectar of Bacchus. Cæsar, the

most distinguished of our guests, ate but little, but you should have seen him eat once at our Formian house. He announced that he was intending to have a full feast, and feast he did, for he intended on rising from dinner to take an emetic, and spare himself the pain of digesting such a load of meat and fruit and wine. You know the feast-goers often do this—eat all they can, with the intention of taking, after the meal, this “emetikan.” The gluttons do it, not that they may escape distress, but that they may return and eat a second dinner the same night. They create a stomach like that of the vulture, which can load and unload almost at pleasure. For another reason Cæsar’s visit to our Formin village was remarkable, for he brought with him a thousand men, soldiers and friends. Most of them encamped in the garden, but my master had to feed all outside the environs and to entertain the important men of the number within the walls,

and they ate and drank in a most hearty manner. Next day, when the company had departed to the last man, Cicero came up to me in the library, and remarked, with a grave face: "Cæsar is indeed a very notable guest, but he is not one of those fellows to whom, on going, one says, 'Call again.'"

My master was no feasting man. There were only a few simple things he could eat. No fish or oyster could he digest, and even after all the care he took of his health he suffered all the years I was with him. He drank wine, but seldom to excess. Only one night is recalled now when he came home with his intellect clouded by wine. He had been out spending the evening with two fellow lawyers, and coming home about midnight he did not as usual come into the library, but he passed straight to his room. In the morning he mentioned, with regret, that he feared he had drank so much the night before as to expel

his wits, for his companions had asked him for an opinion of a law point and he now felt that he had given a foolish reply. On consulting the reports I found that my master had not been very drunk after all. The question that had been raised at the neighbors was, whether an heir to an estate could bring action for damages the estate had sustained before it actually came into his possession, he being the legal heir apparent?

My dear, Xemines, I must give you rest from these small matters, by telling you now in rapid succession of four large events; I may call them the four dark days of all the long years. In their books the Egyptians and the Persians tell of days when the sun did not shine, but showed a black, sullen face; when the wild bird flew to its nest, and the cattle bellowed and groaned in the fields. Be these stories true or not, dark days came to our house. First came the divorce of the wife and

mother, Terentia. On a certain day, only five years ago, this wife and mother bade Tullia farewell, and left the home where she had been through all the period of her girlhood and middle life. I saw little reason for such a crisis in the house. I am positive that the event came so gradually that all the parties—the husband and wife and daughter, were already reconciled to it when it came really to pass. My master had had many great trials, and under them was growing old. He needed perfect peace in his home, and constant praise from all. Terentia managed badly all the money matters. She never praised in any manner her famous husband; but on the opposite, set up an opposition of feeling, if I may so speak. Cicero was himself so great that he filled the house to such a degree that there was no room for another. Tullia was full of demonstration over all her father's speeches and writings; and as she drew ever nearer her

father the mother to that degree receded. By degrees Terentia began to look away toward the house of her own father as offering her an asylum, and with the large dowry handed back to her, which she had brought Cicero in her youth, she went away from our villas forever. It is a good quality of Roman law that a man who puts aside his wife must first restore to her the dowry she brought him in her days of youth and beauty. She could not come rich and go away poor.

No sooner had our home circle recovered from this calamity than there came the greatest one that could have assailed the tender heart of my master. Tullia suddenly died. In about her twentieth year, this daughter, whom he had called the “honey sweet,” took away from earth her blessed face and language.

She had been married, but yet her father’s home was almost all the time cheered by her

presence; and when the word came from her sick room that the disease had become suddenly alarming, the grief of the illustrious father was most extreme. Death came very suddenly. All the deep philosophy of my master failed him. Letters from all the great men of the land came to him, bearing all forms of consolations, and some full of reproof that such a statesman should be so broken down by the death of only a daughter. But letters brought no softening of the affliction. We withdrew to our villa of Astura, because, being upon an island it offered the broken heart two blessings—security against the intrusion of man, and the presence of all the sweetness of nature. Here, in this lonely place, my master did not even desire my presence any longer, but alone, every morning, he would walk away to the woods, and would not, perhaps, until evening emerge from their sympathetic shadows. He was also alone much in his

library, and, entering it in his absence, I would find on his table outlines of monuments and forms of epitaphs. His heart, unable any longer to look forward, was thus looking back. Life has been awfully injured when it looks only back.

The tragic fate of Cæsar soon followed to conceal the tomb of the “honey sweet daughter.” All the patriots, and all the rivals of Cæsar, too, had feared that the Ides of March would see him declared King. The friends of this royal movement had pretended to find oracular dictates that only a King could conquer the Parthians. As the Ides drew near, the city became restless and suspicious in all ways at once. On the morning of the Ides we all went to the Senate. By noon Cicero and I, his servant, were in our places, anxious, but uncertain. My master knew of no conspiracy. All began to wonder that Cæsar did not come to preside, for there seemed to

be business awaiting transaction. I learned that night that Cæsar had resolved, as by mere accident, to stay at home until the much talked of Ides should have passed by. That morning his wife had told him that she had dreamed that he had come flying to her in the night, saying, "Save me!" This helped detain Cæsar. He had also gone out in the garden in the morning to note how his doves and pheasants would fly when he should feed them or call them. They came up on his left hand. This also helped him in his resolution to let that day pass by in the most possible of retirement. The conspirators, finding the day passing and that their victim would perhaps not come to the forum, made out a pressing demand for the imaginary King, and sent down a messenger to Cæsar's house, telling him that a case of importance was being argued, and that the Senate would be gratified if he would come and preside. He at once dismissed his

secret forebodings, and ordering out his litter, entered and was borne along to the assembly. To a watchman on the street he remarked pleasantly: "Ah, friend, the Ides of March have come, and have brought no trouble." "Come, but not gone," was the reply.

Seated upon his Chair of State in the Curia Pompeii, Cæsar asked that the case be at once presented. Tullius Cimber then said that he had a brother in exile whom he would now petition the Senate to recall; and while pleading for this brother he grew more and more earnest, and at the end of each sentence took a step forward as though he would lay his affectionate pleadings upon the very breast of Julius. Other Senators, too, began to speak as though the case were one of tremendous importance; and as they spoke they, too, moved gently forward. It is my own impression, dear Ximines, that they overdid their earnestness, and that Cæsar's heart suddenly

divined that the eloquence was full of something more terrible than the exile of Cimber's brother. Cæsar arose from his seat, but in an instant the dagger of Casca gleamed and came down. I heard the dead sound of the blow. In his fearful tremulousness, Casca had struck his grand victim only in the shoulder blade. Cæsar grasped the dagger, and screamed forth in a loud voice, "Casca, you villian, what means this?" While we all gazed, horror-stricken, suddenly other daggers gleamed and struck, and the great man, muttering some pathetic words which I could not catch, fell heavily upon the floor. Some relate that he said, "And thou, Brutus!" Others told me next day that when he saw Brutus raise his dagger, he said, "And my son! Brutus!" It had long been rumored that Brutus was a son of Cæsar.

In a few days after this thrilling event, my master began to say that it was a great over-

sight in the Republicans not to have slain Antony; that he was more willing to be a despot than Julius had been, and that had the conspirators invited him (Cicero) to their liberty feast, there was one dish that would not have been carried away uncarved. My master despised and feared Mark Antony. I must close this letter, dear Ximines, by telling you how this enmity soon hurried my Cicero out of life. When Antony and Octavius and Lepidus formed the second Triumvirate, and deceived the people by giving them three tyrants instead of one, each two of the Triumvirs conceded to the other the privilege of putting to death his greatest enemy. Lepidus demanded Lucius Cæsar; Octavius demanded Paulus; Antony asked the life of Cicero.

We were at the Tusculum villa. A messenger came in fearful haste, his horse almost falling from fatigue. Cicero and his brother went out to meet him, and in a few moments

came back into the great hall. Cicero said to me, calmly: “Antony has condemned me to death.” My heart sunk. I was in a moment glad that Tullia had passed to the grave, which has no fresh sorrow. A group of servants were called, both boatmen and porters, and, having gotten ready the most essential things, we hurried to Astura, one of my master’s villas, a few stadia away. Should we reach that point, from there we should sail for Macedonia. But there was little hope of a final escape from the wide domain of Rome. The road was literally sprinkled with our tears. When we halted, each stood with an arm around his friend, and Cicero and his brother embraced each other many times, and bade many farewells; for, in my master, friendship was as vast a thing as learning or eloquence.

We sailed from Astura, but, after a day out in rough weather, Cicero grew sick, and at the same time he felt a great longing to risk his

native land, or die upon its soil. He made our seamen sail into a harbor where we had a villa, and there we all disembarked. The porters took up the litter and bore him to our beautiful Formian house. Here we had known happy times in the past. When we had gotten into the ample hall, he said, "Let me die here, in the country I have attempted so often to save." He lay down to sleep. It was the 7th of December. In only a few moments, servants came in from remote parts of the farm, saying that horsemen were coming toward the house. The porters did not wait for the order or even the permission of Cicero, but, affectionately taking him up, they laid him in the litter, and told him they must go back to the ship. We had advanced only a hundred paces, when the assassins closed up around the baffled group. The slaves set down the litter. Cicero parted the curtains, and reaching out his head, gray with age and trouble,

he addressed one of the pursuers by name, and said: "Strike me, if you think it is right." The bloody men halted an instant. The face before them was calm and noble. The hearts conscious of guilt faltered, but only for an instant. Herennius, who had dismounted, stepped forward, and, with a half dozen ill-aimed and cruel blows, he severed the head from the body. The body remained in the litter; the head rolled over on the earth beneath. The hands, too, were cut off and were borne to Antony, who ordered them to be fastened up in the Forum, where the lips and hands, too, had been so eloquent against kings.

My dear Ximines, I heard this matchless speaker deliver more than thirty great orations, and I have read all his books and letters, and am thus familiar with the utterances, public and private, of his great soul, but, to my memory, no words of his come now with more significance or beauty than those uttered

in the last days of his life: “I try to make my enmities transient, and my friendships eternal.”

Your friend,

TIRO.

TUSCULUM VILLA, DEC., 19.

[A. U. C. 710.]

PARLEZ VOUS FRANCAIS?

PARLEZ VOUS FRANCAIS?

The studies of youth, and, indeed, of all the life of man, have more than one object. It would be a sufficient warrant for hours of daily reading and methodical observation should we think only of the high pleasure such labor brings. But long before such pleasure is thought of by the pupil or the instructor, books are placed before the mind from a sense of the absolute utility of reading and writing and arithmetic. To this most general and obvious reason for school days must be added one more immense reason for this long sojourn among the languages and the sciences—the mental powers which result from such sojourn. Education, as a word, involves this idea, for it implies neither pleasure nor stores of information, but a developing of the mental germs

and tendencies. The mind is created full of tendencies or aptitudes, and under the influence of daily use these tendencies develope into great forces. The soul of the Indian girl contains a tendency toward a love of the beautiful. She will prefer a wild flower to a stone or a stick, and will enjoy a local love song to quite a high degree. This aptitude in the natural wild girl can be enlarged in successive generations until we have, instead of this Indian maid, a De Stael, or a Charlotte Bronte, or a Mrs. Browning. By this process of enlarging by use, a muttering red man becomes a Cicero or a Tacitus, or a flowing writer or an exquisite artist. In pursuing, for thousands of years, this work of evoking mental forces, two inquiries have attended the advancing race—what studies do most strengthen the mind? and what kind of information is of most absolute value? It is perfectly safe to say that no answer has yet come to these questions. It is

perhaps equally safe to say that none ever will come, it being probably true that there are many studies of equal merit, just as there are thousands of landscapes of equal sweetness, and thousands of faces and forms of equal beauty.

For many centuries it has been assumed, that the study of the dead languages, that is, the dead great languages—Latin and Greek, and of the higher mathematics, is the labor which gives best results, the exercise which turns a plowboy into an orator or a statesman or a philosopher. College courses have been run amid these three shapes of toil and information, and it came to pass long ago, that a mind not reared upon this strong food was deemed still an infant, having known only the weakness that comes from a diet of diluted milk. That power of prejudice, the power of what has long been, over the frail form of what might be, which we see in old medicine, or old relig-

ion, or old politics, re-appears in old education, and a scholar or a thinker without the help of Latin and Greek was as impossible as a state without a king, or a salvation without a clergyman. The feeling in favor of the classic course has not been all a prejudice, for that was and is a noble course of mental progress, but it was a prejudice so far as it denied the value of all other forms of mental industry, and failed to perceive that what the human mind needs is exercise and not necessarily Greek exercise or Latin exercise. A special must not thus dethrone a universal. A king may be a good governor, but his courtiers and sons and daughters must not overrate the crowned man and predict the utter failure of any nation that may ever dare attempt to live without the help of a throne and royal children. Evidently the greatest, widest truth, is that the mind is made more powerful by exercise, and it will always be a secondary consideration

whether this exercise shall come by loading the memory with the words and forms found in several languages, by compelling the judgment to work continually amid the many possibilities of syntax and translation, or shall come by a direct study of facts and causes and laws, as found in science and history and literature.

It favors the classic course amazingly that no other course of mental development has ever been attempted in what is called the great era—the Christian era; but it might well shake our opinion, the thought that the Greeks and Latins became great without being fed exclusively upon a diet of grammars and dictionaries and mathematics. Richter asks, “Whither do those sunflowers turn which grow upon the sun?” So may we ask, what made mighty those children that were born into the classic tongues? What made the man Pericles and the man Plato? and the women Sappho and Aspasia? What seven years’ course

had they in dead languages? There can be but one answer, and that must be that the mind is made powerful and great by all far-reaching after the truths and fancies around it—by a constant and loving effort to enlarge its powers and accumulations. Pericles and Plato and Cicero and Humboldt and Mill and Webster and Clay were educated by intellectual toil and hope and zeal in their adjacent worlds, whatever those worlds may have been. The class-rooms of Oxford and Cambridge are, indeed, good worlds for the forming mind to master, but not many of the eagles of genius have, comparatively speaking, taken in such linguistic schools their first lessons in lofty flight. All the ages are school-houses, and the great men have been those who never played truant nor shirked, but who loved the school-house, whether it was by the Nile, under Rameses, or at Athens, under Pericles, or at Oxford, under Elizabeth or Victoria.

The Latin and Greek tongues once possessed an inestimable worth, because there was little of broad and powerful thought outside of those two literatures, and within them there were a power and beauty not yet perhaps surpassed. Soon after the opening of the Christian drama, the human mind became enslaved by a politico-religious government, which discouraged all thought, except that which tended to establish a throne and mark out an expensive way to a strange heaven, or a still more strange hell. Mind grew narrower and weaker as the centuries passed by. Scholars were content to write the life of some ascetic monk, and to fill up with miracles a life that had been empty of both usefulness and food. Far along in the clouded periods, when some of the monks happened upon Latin and Greek books, it was as though the deaf had begun to hear, the blind to see, and the dumb to speak. Compared with a biography of some whining

zealot, whose glory lay in the scarcity of his food, and in the abundance of his personal dirt, the poems of Homer and Virgil, and the orations of Cicero and the meditations of Plato, were full of almost divine beauty, and thus exalted by a value both intrinsic and relative, Latin and Greek ascended the throne in the great kingdom of mind and sentiment. No broader or freer literature than the old classic thought has ever existed. From Homer to Tacitus there was freedom of the mind. No church or state told the thinkers what to think or express. Indeed each ruler was himself a scholar of his period, and, republic or empire, the state was always literary in its tastes and works. The rulers and statesmen were all poets or orators and philosophers, with full permission to select any theme, and to say upon it whatever pleased the hand that held the pen. Through the Latin and Greek gates there rushed out upon the dark Christian ages

a stream of intellectual liberty and power. Out of stones so noble, the colleges and universities, which now reckon their ages by centuries, built up their greatness of merit and fame, and our age will never be able to express too much gratitude toward those old states which furnished the new epoch with such foundations of mental and spiritual development.

We come now to a universal phenomenon—that of the pupil excelling the master. Moses was surpassed by Daniel and Isaiah. Watts' engine is superseded. The man who taught music to Beethoven is forgotten in the splendor of his humble student. Modern Europe has moved far beyond old Greece, and in the modern languages and literature and sciences, all said and thought of on the coast of the old Mediterranean finds its amazing equivalent. Once the roll of human greatness read thus : Homer, Hesiod, *Æschylus*, Euripides, Pericles, Plato, Virgil, Cicero, Cæsar, Tacitus, and

the splendor of the catalogue none will have the rashness to deny; but in the later centuries the book so long sealed has been opened, and there have been added Dante and Milton and Shakspeare and Goethe and Schiller, and such thinkers as Bacon and Newton, and such students as Cuvier and Humboldt and Muller and Darwin and Huxley and Agassiz. By these enormous additions the equilibrium of the old earth has been disturbed, and a side, which once lay in perpetual shadow, enjoys now a long summer-time. The buried palms and ferns of the Arctic latitude tell us that what is now the North Pole, and the region of almost lifeless frost, was once a land upon which the warm sun shone, and over which hot thunder-storms passed. Some external force came to make the planet revolve upon some new inclination of its axis, and to remand to night and ice a continent which had once enjoyed the seasons, which

now bless America or France. Into the intellectual world came a wonderful company of modern princes—a Newton, equalling a Plato, and a Shakspeare balancing all antiquity; and, under the heavy footsteps of all these moderns, the earth has been whirled about, and a longer and deeper shadow falls upon the land, where Demosthenes once thundered, and Sappho once sang. With this tipping over of the earth, the Greek and Roman lands lost their exclusiveness of empire, and were invited to become only brotherly states in a world-wide republic. The reasons for the long, patient study of those old tongues have, in part, thus passed away, since they are no longer the languages, which contain the most or the best of human learning and thought. As acquisitions and as mental exercises, those languages will always be valuable, but this will take place henceforth, in a world where other studies, equally valuable in all respects,

will present their claims to the student, old or young, abounding in wealth or pinched by poverty. As language is made up of embalmed ideas, the modern tongues must be confessed to be powerful rivals of Greek and Latin, for the world having grown larger since Homer and Virgil, the modern tongues contain more ideas than were held by all the ancient kingdoms and republics.

Not only is it questionable whether the dead languages should any longer outrank, as studies, the great modern dialects, but it is also a matter of grave doubt whether an argument can be framed in support of the educational theory which devotes years, early and late, to the study of any of the forms of speech, ancient or modern. It may seem a form of mortal sin—a sin beyond the reach of masses and holy water—to confess that there exists, under Heaven, any such doubt, and yet something must be said on this linguistic mania,

even though the utterance should prove most amazing and unwelcome. Language in essence is a catalogue of names. Words are the names of things and of actions. If Æschylus spoke of *kumaton anarithmaton gelasma*, he saw and embalmed in sound the beautiful truth of nature, and the merit lies not in the sounds of the vowels and consonants, but in the genius that saw, in the morning ripple of the sea, "the numberless smiles of the waves." What the human soul needed was some one able to lay upon the broad ocean that sweetness of expression which had been sought for and found only upon the lips and face of woman. If a smile is a sudden flash of light and kindness, then what an interpreter of the ocean is he who first tells us to look out upon its wide-spread and delicate smilings! But it is not the language that is so great; it is the sudden spiritualizing of the ocean. Language is only a name for the strange

beauty of the water, and, hence, it is of no consequence whether the name be "*kumaton anarithmaton gelasma*," or the "sea's innumerable smile," or the "many twinkling smile of the waves," or whether the Frenchman, or German, or Spaniard bedecks the simile with his raiment of words and syntax. The expression uttered by the Greek poet becomes the world's single fact and property, and the possession of a hundred languages by any one individual will not add anything whatever to that morning and evening radiance of the Atlantic or Pacific. When we who had spent seven years over Greek, first stood upon the sea-shore, our hearts asked the old dead tongue to help us estimate that infinite scintillation of the flood; and did we not, all of us, bless God that He had permitted us to study Greek? Did we not feel that all who had not read the "*Prometheus*" in the original were cut off from nature, as though born blind? What a

mistake of a name for a substance! for now when all we ex-denizens, far away at last from college walls, happen upon the beach, and look out upon the blue, we ask for no more blessed expression of the scene than our own tongue can bring us in its powerful sounds, "the numberless smiles of the waves." Goethe expressed the same thought in the German, Lamartine in the French; and thus let the speech change a thousand times, there is only the one thought hidden away in the varied accents.

In any one of the great modern tongues there is now stored away all the facts of the earth up to this date. If Virgil asked us to note the beauty of the moon at midnight, when it passes in and out amid fleecy clouds, we so do, and our heart is happy or sad, as was his, it being of no importance that he called the planet "*luna*," while we call it "*moon*," and that he called "*nubila*" those masses which

we call "*clouds*." Compared with the grandeur of the scene, all these variations of the vowels and intonations are things of childish importance. It might, therefore, easily come to pass that the student, young or old, may, in the study of many tongues, be giving years of time to accidental matters, instead of to those facts of being and action which are the permanent and valuable estate of man. A certain Roman orator we call Cicero. In his own day he may have been called Tullius. Intimate friends may have called him Marcus. We do not now know how his family pronounced the "c" or the "u." But let it be true that this lawyer had three names, and that there are many possible ways of uttering those names, the one fact only remains valuable—the man himself. As such he has entered into the world's intellectual and moral riches, and we have him, be we German or French or English, in our lip and tongue service. Com-

pared with this gold of possession, all else is dust. To compare the thoughts of this lofty Roman with the thoughts of Burke and Pitt and Sumner, in the arena of political study; to pass over to morals, and compare him with Puffendorf and Spencer; to pass to religion, and compare him with Wesley or Stuart Mill or Jefferson; to pass to rhetoric, and compare his mode of argument with that of Fox or Webster or Clay—would be to be engaged in pursuits greater than a mastery of these tongues, in which all these widely separated minds may have done their sincere thinking in the sight of man and God. Their words, like their clothing or their food, were local and incidental. Indeed, of less importance than the food these chieftains ate, for that food might be good for us to imitate or avoid, whereas it is of little value to us that Cicero called that being *Deus* whom we call God, and that quality “pietas” which we call

“piety.” It is the unchanging contents of the earth man must chiefly seek, and so brief is life that its lamp burns out before we have read the great volume of events and experiences, and no time is left for the study of those strange marks and sounds in which Egyptian or Persian or Athenian or Roman may have made record of his life or wisdom or sentiment. A hundred languages have passed away, in all of which the golden rule was putting forth its slow leaves, and men care not with what gutturals or labials or aspirates the first moralists began to express the worth to society of brotherly love. As man himself has come along over lands which have become deserts, passing in and out of temples and homes which have become dust, and falling into tombs which have no stone and by which no flower blooms, and yet he is here to-day in divine splendor; so truths, like the law of love, have come along, stepping

from language to language, and then leaving to decay or neglect the stairway of their long ascent. So subordinate is language to idea that the Christian world, which rests its hope upon the beatitudes of Jesus, does not know in what speech He first said, "Blessed are the pure in heart." As the sea changes its shore line, and leaves far inland temples which once stood where the solemnity of the waves joined in the worship, and yet it is the same sea, flowing and re-flowing in tide and storm, so humanity leaves as dead and abandoned its old shores of speech, and along some new coast of forms and sounds flows and re-flows with a tide of wisdom and emotion rising higher as the ages pass. Each great language, English, French, German, is the present shore of the living sea, and if born into one of these tongues, that tongue is for you or me a measureless main. It is the aggregate of the past six thousand years.

Do I speak French? Not yet have I learned the universe hidden away in the language of my birth and soul. When you have caught up with the world's facts, then, if time remains, you might ask what the Frenchman would call those facts. After having studied the life, the tendencies, the loves of the sun-worshippers and the Egyptians; after having seen the Queen of Sheba journeying to behold the greatness of Solomon; after having committed to memory the sublime chants of Job; after an inquiry into old liberty and old bondage, and into old science and art, it might be of interest to know what letters and sounds a Frenchman would use in expressing the world's history, but to know all about the wanderings of Ulysses and his son is the thing to be desired more than the information that the French called the father Ulysse and the son *Telemaque*.

Let it be conceded that persons who are to

devote all their life to intellectual pursuits have time for mastering several of the great dialects, ancient and existing; it yet remains a fair inquiry, what quantity of this linguistic work may enter into those courses of study, over which the multitude must pass. Must young persons who have only one idea learn ten ways of expressing it? Or must this person, often a beautiful girl, find ten ideas in the grand language of her native land? What made a Rubenstein was not a score of pianos, but it was genius and labor, practicing upon one adequate instrument. It is well known that, when some years ago certain thousands of families, men and women, were flying before a great conflagration, one citizen was seen to remove from his library nine violins of all ages and pedigrees—a scene made laughable, even at such a gloomy time, by the equally well known fact that this lover of the fiddle could not, from any or all of the strings,

elicit more than the one-ninth part of a tune. As the cart-load of instruments moved onward toward a place of safety, even the best friends of the amateur could not help wishing that the noble gentleman had less of fiddle and more of music. In the department of fashionable education a similar event may be detected in the fact that many young persons are learning more ways of expressing thought than they have thoughts to express, and instead of having ten ideas of value, they give promise of reaching, at last, ten methods of stating one idea, and perhaps a small one at that. For suppose your beautiful daughter of seventeen years has, by much toil and expense, learned to say in five tongues, "He has the pretty yellow dog;" in Greek: *Ehei kalon chloon kuna;* in Latin: *Habet bellum canem gilvum;* in French: *Il a un joli chien de jaune;* in German: *Er hat den schönen gelben Hund;* and could she by industry find

the Chinese and Zulu vowel sounds, used by those remote peoples, to convey that idea of property in an animal, it would be well for the girl and parent to remember that, amid all this variety of speech, there is only the same yellow dog all the time. Under some other theory of education, the mind might have mastered the whole science of Cuvier, and have moved away from the yellow dog to study the whole animal kingdom, from the elephants of India to the garden-making birds of the tropics, and the bank-swallow of America. The poor man, in the cold of mid-winter, does not need ten shovels with which to put one ton of coal into the scuttle, but what he craves is ten tons of coal and one good shovel. It might be of interest to him to know the shape of a Russian or Hindoo scoop, to gaze at the kind of instrument by which the Hebrews put wheat into a sack, or apples into an ox-cart, but the highest happiness of the multitude will always

come more from the coal they may possess in December, than from any collection they might covet of old and modern utensils of lifting and moving fuel from vault to grate. If the remark will not give any offense, it may be let fall here, that there are thousands of boys and girls, older and younger, whose ability to express thought has quite outgrown the thought they have on hand awaiting expression, and, having mastered a great many styles of saying things, they are finding themselves in the position of having nothing to say. When the lovely young lady, who had mastered her French and Italian and Spanish, was led by some machine-loving gentleman to gaze for a moment at the great engines, in the hydraulic works of Chicago, asked him, in her delight, whether the big wheel was turned by men or by a horse, it gave him no peace that she could have put the inquiry into any one of the modern tongues.

The question placed him, for a time, beyond the consolation of philosophy and religion.

The prevailing idea among the upper American classes that even their little children must learn French, and to that end must speak it at the table, is highly blamable, for reasons more than one. It is based upon entire ignorance of the fact that it will require the life-time of each mortal to master the language of his birth and country. All the young years given by Americans to the study of French, are years turned away from the greatest language yet known to man. All the acquisitions of the human race, all the sciences, and arts, and histories, and sentiments of humanity have passed into the English tongue. Each word stands for an idea, and in each great modern dialect all ideas reappear. He that has perfectly mastered his own language has a store of information immense in bulk and rich in value. To excavate many

channels for a river is to lessen the unity and power of the stream otherwise majestic. It will always be proof of some blunder of judgment, or of some stubborn vanity, when Americans will be found using a little French, and German, and Italian, who have not mastered the English of William Wirt, or of Tennyson, or of the eloquent Ruskin. It is not *languages* man needs, but *language*. It is not a room full of violins, but the power to make music. It is therefore simply painful to hear a fashionable girl or woman or man, combining several languages in conversation when the listener knows well that this bright talker could not by any possibility compose an essay in the English of Washington Irving, or Charles Sumner, or the poet Whittier. While they have trifled with grammars and lexicons, or have said elegantly this or that compliment of the season, their own grand English has moved away from their mind and heart just

as husband and home at last disappear from the world of the artful beauty, leaving in her possession the old faded bouquets and the old yellow cards of invitation to dinner or to dance—invitations sent and accepted long ago, when the forehead was smooth and the lips red.

A modern language is a prodigious affair. All will admit that as a system of sounds for expressing truths the Greek language has no equal, but it comes short in just this particular—that the Greeks had not as much to express as the Germans and French and English now have in their keeping. An island has become a continent, a river has widened into a sea. Each of these three modern tongues holds in its embrace a universe, while Greek held only a star. To master one of these new forms of speech is the task of a life, and happy the American who shall ever reach in his own tongue the ease and skill reached in their own tongue by Chateaubriand and Lamartine, and

by Castelar in his dialect, or by Schiller in the rich German. Such a result cannot be reached by attempts to study the words of Lamartine and Gœthe, but by studying the same universe as that which enveloped them, and by compelling our own English harp to play for us all our sincere and passionate music. It must be that the popularity of French comes from a forgetfulness of the absolute immensity of the English language—an immenseness which asks for many years of early and late study, and which should so captivate each one born into its confines that, like the contented soul, one should never care to wander away from home.

The chase after French must come from the want of thought as to the greatness of our own speech, and hence must be one of the popular delusions of the age, but there lies against this worship of French a separate objection. In our generation that nation is not coming to us

as Greece came, laden with deep and inspiring thoughts. Greek speech was once the speech of the world's greatest minds. We recall Plato and Aristotle and Thucydides, and that type of manhood. These were the men who projected Greek into the old courses of study. But that old type of manhood is now standing in England and Germany and America, and the French verbs and nouns and adjectives are coming to us only in the name of fashion and Paris. "*Parlez vous Francais?*" simply means, "Have you seen Paris?" Have you some of her dresses, her dramas, her wallpaper, her furniture, her luxury? A language which sets us all wild for elegant clothing and for handsomer furniture and for new shapes of wedding cards, and which so delights us at the drama, can never come in the dignity of those old classic verbs which never mentioned anything except the great emotions and exploits of the soul. The Greek showed

man human life in its wars and travels and rhetoric and logic and liberty and æsthetic yearnings, but the French of our boarding-schools does little for the average student, except enable him or her to read the bill of fare at a fashionable hotel, and to call by the charming name of *buffet* what once was a sideboard, and to buy and enjoy as an *escriatoire* what had once been known as a writing-desk, and to feel wise over that progress which removes from a lady her work-table, and places before her a *chiffoniere*. So far as the study of this modern dialect inflames the young heart in the direction of bills of fare and novelties for the parlor or dining-room, it can hardly compare favorably with the study of those classic forms which ignored the hotel-keeper and the cook, and introduced the student to Homer and Cicero.

The world's facts and experiences being gathered up in language, there must needs be

men skilled in different languages, that the goods of one land may be transported to another country. Thus Champollion became a transfer boat to ship Egyptian history and learning from hieroglyph to French. Others came to forward the goods from French to English. Immense is this carrying trade—Carlyle carried Goethe across the channel; Longfellow has brought Dante across the sea. But not all the educated need embark in this form of importation, for what we all need is not the key to the hieroglyphics on the old rocks, but the English of the things thus recorded. The Sermon on the Mount is journeying around the world in two hundred tongues, but it is not an acquaintance with these forms the young or old soul needs, but the Sermon on the Mount in the native tongue of him who must live and die among its sublime lessons. Diamonds may be re-set, and having passed a generation upon a queen's

hand, they may be seen on the neck of her daughter, and at last be transferred to a coronet; but the essential value is in the glittering stones themselves, be they on forehead or finger. It is not otherwise with the truths which man has evolved from his observation and experience. They are all one, whether they are whispered to his ear by English or Greek or Arabian lips, and blessed is he to whom some one of these great voices has come with its infinite utterances about time and the world called timeless. When, therefore, a distinguished clergyman declared that when a minister of the Gospel was not keeping well up in Greek he was losing the use of his right arm, he simply blundered along, for the right arm of an orator or statesman or thinker or preacher, can never be in any manner the power to read a foreign text, but it must always be the power to examine or establish a theme which does not

depend in the least upon the vowels and consonants of a time or place. Not a single great idea in the Bible is awaiting any new light from the linguist. The Greek and Hebrew lexicons can do nothing toward answering a single one of the problems of mankind; can shed no light upon the existence of a God, or a life beyond, or upon the path of duty, and hence a long dwelling over those old forms cannot be the right arm of a clergyman. His inspiration must come from ideas mighty as the human race, and not from any wonderment what some particle may have implied when Moses was a lad, or when John was baptizing in the wilderness.

Even when a whole life is given to one's native English or native French, so inadequate still is that language to express the soul that it seems a form of wickedness to divide the heart between many masters, and to have no supreme friend. Chateaubriand, the greatest

master of the French tongue, when he stood near the Niagara Falls almost a hundred years ago, and saw evening coming down from the sky upon all the sublime scene; saw the woods growing gloomy in the deep shadows, and heard the sound of the waters increasing its solemnity as the little voices died away in the night's repose, said. "It is not within the power of human words to express this grandeur of nature." Skilled as he was in a most rich and sensitive form of speech, that speech all of whose resources he knew so well, now failed him, and his spirit had to remain imprisoned, there being no gateway by which its sentiments could escape to the heart of his countrymen. What are you and I to do, then, if we have not loved early, and late, and deeply our own English—that English which is now the leader in literature and all learning; if we have not mastered its words, its elegancies, its power of logic, and humor, and

pathos, and rythm; and have not permitted our minds to become rich in its associations; if we have for years gone along with a heart divided in its love, or with a mind that has studied words more than it has thought and prayed and laughed and wept amid the sublime scenes of nature, or the more impressive mysteries of mankind? "*Parlez vous français?*" Not well; not at all; would to Heaven we could even learn to speak English.

THE HISTORY OF LOVE.



THE HISTORY OF LOVE.

THE great writers of all times have held themselves well away from grave and formal discussion of the sentiment of love. Humanity, charity, benevolence, friendship, have been subjected to abundant literary treatment, but the moralist and the general students of nature have for reasons, known and unknown, passed by in silence that tumult of the heart, which in youth writes love letters, sends gifts of flowers, quotes much poetry, grows sad and happy, thinks alternately of paradise and prison, and which sings and swears and laughs and sighs until the end is reached in a suicide or a wedding. Michelet has indeed furnished a treatise upon L'Amour, but his thoughts will be found grouped around only one single stage of this ailment, and around that stage only as

seen in an idle French woman in her early married life. His book is the history of a day, and not of an epoch, and the picture of some one person, and not of the human heart. It will be the task, delightful and useful, of some Lecky or Draper to compose a history of this powerful passion, just as it was the task of Alger to compose a life of the notion of immortality, and as it was the work of Taylor to record a history of enthusiasm. Love is, indeed, an enthusiasm, and also an immortality.

Such a treatise has, no doubt, been kept back by a reluctance upon the part of profound thinkers to treat with dignity and soberness a sentiment so marred, as they imagine, by association with guitars and perfumed envelopes and bouquets, and with adjectives and adverbs, but it is probable that our profound thinkers are as much over-dressed in their robes of dignity as our lovers are over-bedecked by their clothing and their adjectives. The philosopher

may be guilty of two errors—he may, perhaps, underrate the average quality of the love affair, and he may, to a similar degree, overrate the virtues of himself. If there is not much in the average human heart, it is probable that in the head of the philosopher there may be an equal scarcity of things of real worth. Indeed, no supreme court has yet handed in its opinion that the human race, in its temple of religion or porch of intellectual research, is any greater than the same race in its wide and amazing subjection to this sentiment of love. It is tacitly assumed that there is something very childish and silly in such seven-year courtships as those conducted by that character in the Bible, and by all similar waitings and longings, be they long or short, but there are no visible grounds for such assumptions, and hence the whole question of the fact and value and beauty of this one passion lies before our times an open question.

Let us hope, therefore, that our era, which is more fond of tracing the natural history of an idea than the path of some captain or some king, will sooner or later furnish our libraries with a biography of that strange affection of the heart which has attacked, with more or less violence, all the mortals who have appeared upon this earthly scene.

The career of this disturbance, which is both a convalescence and a decline, a blush of health and a pallor, a giant and an invalid, repeats the general theory of the new philosophy of development, for, in the barbaric races, love is as narrow and as humble as are the languages and the arts. In the savage tribes love exists only in a most elementary form. And, indeed, by barbaric, not only the Indian or the negro is meant, but also all that expanse of territory covered even by the songs of Homer or of Solomon. Attachments between man and woman were weak and ephem-

ral. The cruelty charged upon a Hebrew psalm-weaver on account of his having taken possession of the beautiful wife of one of his captains, is fully equalled by the willingness with which the wife passed over from the first fireside to the second. The tears shed over that affair did not fall in the Hebrew age; they have fallen in those later periods, which have reached a new appreciation of the word home, and the relations under its roof. Helen in Homer did not seem to care much in what tent she hung up her embroidered garments. From the immortal song we learn that this same Helen was an ideal woman of that early Greek period. She was so exceedingly beautiful that about a score of chiefs began to quarrel over her when she was only ten years of age; and when she was a little older, the great men of the land began to enlist armies that they might possess this exquisite jewel of a girl. All the female charms

and virtues known to Greece in that day met in this one name, and therefore she stands as a mark to show us how high the sentiment of love ever rose in that epoch; and when we recall the apparent facility with which this representative woman attached herself to Theseus and Pirithous and Menelaus and Paris and Deiphobus, we must conclude that in her day, the sentiment of love must have been only a few removes from the parallel appetite in the kingdom of brutes. Compared with the modern *Evangeline* and *Lucille*, Helen was a poor specimen of high womanhood. But she was on the same general level with the beauties which graced the low harems of David and Solomon.

Beyond doubt, dreams of something better came at times to those old periods. In Penelope, Homer seems to have had a prophetic vision of an ideal attachment, but Penelope was chained to the absent Ulysses more by

politics than by romance, and, indeed, the wanderer would return, not so much to see her as his old love, as to save the little kingdom and the annual income. Penelope represented considerable property. Such chieftains as Ulysses held their petty kingdoms only by the law of might. The suitors who made night hideous in the palace were not pure worshippers of beauty, but they were adventurers, on the look out for what the Queen was attempting to hold in the shape of money and lands. The fights in and around the palace, the efforts of Telemachus to expel the suitors, his subsequent journey in search of his father, the return of the lost hero, and his assault upon the men who were waiting for the hour for a successful *coup d'etat*, assure us that Penelope was standing guard, not simply over an old love affair, but over the property, real and personal, of herself and Telemachus. In this story of the faithful Queen, we can detect,

therefore, only faint traces of such a friendship as was to be seen between man and woman in some subsequent date in Christian history.

One of the early Greeks, coming just after the Homeric age, objects to marriage, on the ground that when a man takes such a partner he will be annoyed by her wish to eat with him at his table. It was thus a form of calamity to have at the same board what modern times would call the kind eyes and bright face of the wife. It must be avoided, and the true, philosophic mind must be slow to form a friendship which might make a companion of some beauty, who should be in the kitchen or in the garden while the noble husband should be breaking his bread and sipping his wine. If Lord Byron made the remark that he could not bear to see a woman eat, that fact would relegate him back to the low period just alluded to, for that desire for isolation from the society of noble womanhood is pretty well known to

come from a quality of soul which does not love to look its victim in the face. It indicates that passions of a low order have risen in power above all the finer forms of thought and emotion, that words and the general exchange of ideas are unable to bring any pleasure, and that woman, to be anything, must be only a party to a flirtation or a darker intrigue. What was exceptional in Lord Byron was a common sentiment in early Greece. The poet Simonides, in a poem describing the different kinds of women that had filed along before his point of review, tells us indirectly that in most of the classic homes there were domestic broils of a very extreme character—that the words, “Take thee for better or worse, &c., to love and cherish,” had not yet come into the marriage relations of his generation. He mentions the ugly woman as being one at whom men hoot and laugh in the street, thus plainly showing that the sentiment of love had not yet

learned to make any high estimate of spiritual and mental qualities, and that Greece had no such chivalry and romance as may now be found in England and America, where woman is not laughed at on the street, and where a bright mind and a cheerful heart will rival the highest beauty in the art of entrapping a husband.

When the Greeks had made a laughing stock of all the homely women, they found another class equally worthy of ridicule—the class that was fond of personal decoration. This awful creature took baths daily, and made use of perfumed oils. She was such a barbarian that she did her hair up in tresses, and was even so self-conceited as to put flowers into that well-combed hair. Such a woman, says the poet, will make her husband “familiar with poverty.” In an age when such sentiments appeared in popular poetry, marriage must have been very much like the purchase

of an ox or a horse—a careful study of the work to be done on the premises of the purchaser. But when Simonides comes to contemplate the tattling woman, the endless talker, he lets in a flood of light upon the relation of the husband to the so-called “partner of his joys.” “Nor,” says the poet, “can the husband stop her with threats, though in a rage he should knock out her teeth with a stone.” How many blushing brides could have been found in old Greece with their front teeth thus wanting we have no way of learning, but we must confess that when a honeymoon is liable in the first families of the land to be followed by a loss of articles so useful and beautiful, and that, too, in an age which had no dental art of restoration, then, indeed, is the passion of love only ephemeral and brutal. Much as the nineteenth century may secretly wish that ladies given to interminable clatter might in some way be deprived of those ivories which

help make the articulate sounds in question, yet so kind and romantic is the age that the man who would displace those talkative teeth with a rock cannot be found in our best society.

Thus, if we may believe an old observer of old times, there were three groups of ladies that received from Greek gentlemen sneers and jeers, and not a few most violent blows with hand or club—the ugly woman, the dressy woman, and the tattling woman. What woman, then, was lovable in that far-off land? Very kindly the poet tells us, the real good woman is “like the busy bee; under her care his living prospers and increases.” The early Greek wife, then, was a classic squaw. From the condition of a bride she passed quickly to the drudgery of a slave or humble domestic. Just before marriage, the noble young man of the period perhaps smiled at the girl of his choice. She was happy to take off the military cap

of her lover and put it on her own head, and walk all around the uncovered hero, and perhaps she said to him, “Am not I a pretty soldier?” In answer, he would place his hand under her chin, and turn up the face until the eyelids fell down, covering the beautiful eyes with beautiful lashes, thus starting the problem whether the eye of woman is handsomer when open or when shut. But after a few days of this lingering upon the borders of the earthly paradise the pair turned away, the husband to resume the character of domestic tyrant, and the wife to enter upon dreary years, full of all the possible sorrows of woman. Love was in those ages only a rudiment of a coming noble sentiment. It was Darwin’s ape, from which a humanity was to come by slow steps. It was a wild olive, too bitter for human lips, but waiting for the cultivation of reason to make it rich and sweet for all who should come with the reason and the cultivation.

It is confessed by all students of the classic world that there prevailed through the thousand years of that kingdom a general progress of all political and moral ideas and practices. In such a wide progress this great friendship between man and woman actively participated, cases of deep and true love came into being, and noble sentiments upon this subject began to sparkle in literature. In Sappho, love begins to speak in its native and powerful tongue, and all the better because it speaks not by masculine lips, but through those other lips which are most wont to spiritualize the words they utter. It is not fully known just who this Sappho was, nor just all that she said, but judging from the only evidence we possess, either for or against the girl, we seem shut up to the conclusion that this poetess had begun to see the sentiment of love in that higher light in which it is seen by our own Tennysons, and Longfellow, and Brown-

ings. Not that she or her era reached in reality the life-long union of heart to heart, but that she and a few others saw, as in prophetic vision, a friendship—a companionship between man and woman which had not been formulated by Moses, or David, or Solomon, or Homer, or Simonides.

In this woman from Mitylene, in the sixth century before our era, the passion of love shows signs of becoming a poetic and romantic sentiment—a branch of the eternal beauty. To the virtue of animal love is added the charm of a certain divine friendship, just as though an age was coming when a bride could hope to be the loved one of years, instead of the toy of a day. It is almost certain that Sappho was a woman of unrivaled mental power and personal attractiveness. She had the grasp and courage of Madame De Stael, and the tenderness of Mrs. Browning. It is inferred that she soon gathered around her feet a group of

gifted folk, old and young, and that she and they flung out upon the world more tender literature than has escaped oblivion, and that the high ideals of friendship, certain *glorias* over undying attachments, formed the burden of this combined song. What helps make Sappho stand at the gate of a new dispensation is the fact that, in her, woman began to sing upon a subject which had been treated by only the masculine branch of humanity. When the primitive man sings of love, then be on the lookout for coarseness. It was the primitive man, remember, who was wont to knock out the front teeth of the woman he had sworn to love and protect; it was the primitive man who feared his wife might desire to eat at his table; it was this masculine creature who reached the conclusion that an ugly woman might be laughed at in the street, and who anticipated the verdict of Thucydides that she is the best woman "Regarding

whom the world knows nothing either good or bad," and it was a masculine judge of these matters who, in a land not Greek nor Roman, retailed to the public such low animalisms as those found by some mistake in a holy book, and called the Song of Solomon by men and women who would dislike to sing its peculiar images in good society. It has been the disposition and inmost genius of woman to make her attachments spiritual and eternal. Virgil says: "Variable and mutable always is woman," but the probability that Virgil indulged here in a poetic license is very great, for, in the long page of history, we see man busy changing his mistresses and laying plans in politics or religion, by which he can bring the number of his female companions up to seven or eight hundred. Solomon's heart changed about eight hundred times, while the modern Mormon Chieftain called upon about fifty different wives to show us what a great slander

had fallen from the lips of Virgil. Between the Mormon and the Hebrew lies a large area of time and territory, quite thickly settled by eminent men who could not, without a blush, intimate that woman's love was ephemeral.

Not only do the nature and taste of woman make her the natural advocate of a perpetual friendship with one person, but her interests come to reinforce her nature and taste. She cannot accumulate husbands by law or religion; she cannot, even by persuasion, entrap and retain a multitude of these precious articles. If she is able to captivate a single one, she is deemed fortunate. In the philosophy of losing this one in a month or a year she can take no part. If she has caught an ugly one, she dares not laugh at him; if she has caught a garrulous one, she dares not knock out his front teeth. Not every day can she have a new choice out in the wide field. Thus it was, from the earliest period of history, much to the personal interest of

every bride to say to her husband, “You shall be mine forever.” In the poetess Sappho love therefore found the first powerful champion, and in her verse began to push out those wings which were to be emblems of immortality. Clay is, indeed, to be found in her thoughts, but there is more gold than clay, showing a great change from those dreary centuries when passion had more clay than gold.

Led along by a new and immense quantity of love-song, made popular by Sappho and Corinna, and inflamed by a constant study of the beautiful in form, the Greeks, in the day of their glory, fell into a strange excess or fanaticism of passion, and wrote a chapter of history of which the civilized world is ashamed. It became the stupid dream of some of the greatest and best of the classics that all beauty of form and of motion was the pearl of great worth, and that, hence, an illustrious hero or scholar or statesman might select from the

streets or from the slave market some graceful boy and make a Dulcinea for a few years of his form and face. It does credit to the heart of Grote, in his wonderful volumes on Plato, that he has spread over this habit of Athens that mantle of charity found in the words: "It was all a simple worship of the beautiful." One might wish that so great a name as that of Grote might put all doubt to sleep, but in that classic world there was so much vice, and what we should now call vulgarity, such abundant remains of the horrible and infamous, that not even the eloquence of Grote can make that age of pet boys other than a cloud upon Greek memory. After having caused to pass before our mind all that delight which the Greek soul drew from all contact with the perfect in symmetry and feature, having recalled the fact that children having any blemish in limb or feature were not thought worthy of life, and that old persons were despised in Homeric and later days because they had lost

their physical charms, having recalled the truth that Greece was the Mother of the fine arts, and lost her state because she loved too much her statuary and pictures and temples, and died because she had exchanged statesmen for artists, the feeling still remains that in that same glorious land this form of friendship, under review, was one of those dark vices which so mar all the nations of antiquity. Xenophon made no æsthetic defense of these boy companions, but in enumerating the crimes and vices of Menon, the general, he designates as infamous that form of friendship for which Mr. Grote apologizes as being a method of loving the beautiful; and as Xenophon stood nearer than any English student to the facts, it seems necessary for us to conclude that sometimes the classic devotion to the beautiful was like that religious zeal which has often worshiped God by means of vulgarity and cruelty, and even murder. But let us dismiss from

thought this subject, uncongenial to modern taste.

Aspasia came to Athens to render woman more than ever an object of reverence, and thus her friendship more of a prize. Her picture must not be painted in the colors of the nineteenth century, but in the full light of that period in human history, when the wife was a silent, patient slave; and when the true love was the toy of a spring and a summer. It was necessary that woman should assert herself, and take possession of what empire she might, as a queen. If she had been formed by the Creator as a companion of man—a companion in thought and reason and sentiment, at the table and on the journey, and by the fireside, it was time some attention were called to such original significance of all affairs of the heart. At intervals great queens appeared, not to fight battles like the Amazons, but to lift love upward from passion to a high friendship, and

make it a communion of kindred, but dissimilar, spirits, for whose united life all the years of earth were only too brief. By some freak of nature, or decree of Providence, there was born, at Miletus, a child which received the name Aspasia. In Miletus two streams of thought and learning met—Greek lore came to it from the West, Asiatic lore from the East. There Cadmus and Hecatacus and Anaximander and the great Thales were born, and, as a result, each gifted child born in that city was cradled in an awakening air. The young Aspasia was so beautiful that she became in girlhood the favored of all the distinguished “Milesians;” and, as learning was, in that day and city, as essential as beauty, the favored girl was compelled to make her studies bear some relation to the matchless expression of her face. No reception, no symposium, no “coming with a few friends,” was complete without the presence of this youthful

queen. Having reached early womanhood, her ambition grew with her growing mind, and her eye and heart turned toward that Athens which, lying across an arm of the Mediterranean, seemed brilliant in spiritual light, the light of philosophy, poetry and art. And just then the greatest of minds was ruling the most illustrious of States. It was only natural for one who must have felt conscious of being the greatest of women, to desire to live in a city ruled by Pericles, whose eloquence and learning and taste were making up for Greece its golden age. Perhaps it might be the happy destiny of this Milesian girl to see, to meet, perhaps even to speak to this Athenian statesman.

In carrying out the idea that there was nothing valuable on earth except the Greek stamp were on the goods, Athens passed a law that only marriage with a Greek woman was lawful—that only purely Greek children

were legitimate. Aspasia, then, could not marry in the narrow Athens. But great, powerful minds must have deeply felt the meanness of the law, and this girl from Miletus must have sailed from home with her mind more absorbed by the charms of learning and art and elevated society than by perplexity over the situation of foreign women in the domestic matters of this world. How long it was after the remarkable personage reached Athens before she had the happiness of meeting Pericles, and before Pericles had the parallel honor of meeting Aspasia, the chronicles do not tell us, but enough is known in the simple fact that their hearts became one for life and death. The unlawful, but absolute, wife assisted the statesman in study, in composition, in devising laws, in planning public buildings, and became a remarkable emblazonment on the sky of the divine idea that woman was created to be the full companion and

equal partner of her husband, and if this lesson was read to the Athenian libertines and wife-beaters by a woman who walked over a law perhaps already dead, it was only so much the worse for the law. Aspasia helped show the old world, and helped teach the nations now existing that love is a friendship between one man and one woman, which is theoretically to inspire two lives, and is to double the happiness and power of each member of the deep and imperishable contract. At times the Athenians derided the orator who, for so many years, idolized the one woman, and who made an equal of a supposed inferior, but the generations coming into the world long after the Athenian mob had ceased to mock, feel that Pericles uttered a significant thought when he said, in dying, "Athens entrusted her greatness, and Aspasia her happiness to me"—true to public duty and private love.

With painful slowness did the human fam-

ily learn its lessons of affection. Whether we think of the bonds that should attach parent to child or adult children to aged parents, or husband and wife to each other, we see in each direction that mankind has studied with great reluctance and with great negligence the relations of heart to heart.

The coming historian in this department of human experience will, if he writes justly, devote a long chapter to the influence of Christianity upon the quality of this sentiment. Christianity proper—that is, considered apart from Judaism and from accidental facts seen along its path, must be confessed to have done much toward spiritualizing the attachment between man and woman, much toward inculcating the idea of a relation of a high character between two souls, and toward establishing the principle that this friendship must last as long as life lasts. One of the most divine of Christ's teachings is his estimate of love. No

one so removed it from the lowness and coarseness of the street, and no one up to his day pointed out better the delicate shadings of its color. Had he spoken in the language of our time, or in such details as we find in the essayist and the novelist of the high school, what hot words he would have spoken against those who occupy street corners and crossings, and even stand at the gates of churches and theaters, that they may make a libertine's feast out of the beauty of the noble wives and daughters who may be passing and re-passing at such public doors! But Christ could utter only general truths, but truths they were which helped sweep away the degradation of woman and the less honorable thoughts and alliances of man. Awakened by a soul so pure, and aided by such an organizer as the church, which decreed the permanency of marriage, love began to put on its rich garments and to walk a queen. Romance and poetry and the

drama took up the general theory that the heart can love but once, and that in the advance of that attachment there is a paradise—beyond its tomb all is a desert. Even the songs of Burns rise above his actual life and sing the new theory in the verses to Mary in Heaven. The practice of an age is always inferior to its ideal, and hence individuals here and there enter into second and third and fourth marriages when death has come to terminate an association ; but the high standard society has reached in its fundamental thought may be learned from every drama and poem and song of the heart. Even Byron felt the power and elegance of this public ideal, when, in his deep contempt for transient beauties, he had to sigh out the longing for one fair spirit for a minister,

“That he might all forget the human race,
And hating no one, love but only her.”

From Dante to Tennyson this highest form

of human attachment has been pictured as existing between two only, and as undying. Beatrice in her purity, and Francesca in her error and disgrace, join with the later Juliet and Ophelia in a beautiful advocacy of the dream that these partnerships of the soul are made in heaven, and involve mortals like the toils of a sweet, resistless fate. In modern romantic literature, the ideal lover, male or female, is the one who, amid the severest trials, stands most unshaken, and who comes from the furnace only a purer metal. Even such sentimental songs as those of Tom Moore carry the reader's best judgment whenever the verses convey the idea that

“Through the furnace unflinching, thy way I'll pursue,
And guard thee, and save thee, or perish there, too.”

The recent progress in the education of woman is destined to mark a great progress in the career of the matrimonial idea. This higher intellectual culture makes woman a

companion for man, however eminent he may become by his study and his profession ; and this equality of greatness will compel a devotion, which was once ephemeral and largely physical, to become a sympathy as well of mind with mind. The pathetic attachment of John Stuart Mill to his wife, and of the Brownings to each other, are only visible proofs that the men and women of the present age are carrying on a business in courtships and marriages far more honorable and far happier than were affairs of the heart, when the earth was peopled by Greeks and Romans and Medes and Persians. And out of the study of this coming history of a reformed sentiment and practice, there may come to the next generation of young persons a wisdom which will lay in deep reason the foundations of marriage, which will shun the rocks of a thoughtless fancy, and the yet more dangerous risks of a mere temporary passion which, in a few

months, dies, as pass away the attachments of brutes. The ideal day will approach when the young man's love of some equal in wisdom, but superior in beauty of mind and body, and in all the forms of taste and tenderness, will be for many years an inspiration of each morning and evening, as it may come in gladness or in depression. The love of money and of fame will be humble impulses compared with the desire to make happy the one companion of the heart, who has left home, even the infinite devotion of her mother, to find, under another's roof, the care which will rival the mother's solicitude, and to hear from other lips words of praise and esteem, which the tomb will prevent the mother from speaking always to her idolized child.

THE GREATEST OF THE FINE ARTS.



THE GREATEST OF THE FINE ARTS.

As the greatest quality of man is not his form nor his swiftness nor his strength nor his power to accumulate property, but is his ideas and sentiments, so that will be the greatest art which shall express the most of this greatness of man. To measure the fine arts one must ask which one can best express the most thoughts and feelings, and the greatest thoughts and feelings? And the answer will determine upon what forehead the laurels must be placed. In the German story of "Love Without Words," by Musæus, the value of that gateway of the soul, which is called language, becomes painfully evident, for the lovers, daring only to see each other, and at long distance, and forbidden to resort to that precious go-between and mediator

called a love-letter, could make no progress, except a progress of melancholy, by all the other arts known to human genius. Music failed, flowers failed, sighs failed, architecture and sculpture failed, and, doubtless, both lovers would have died of suppressed poetry and affection, had not Franz found the altar where Meta was accustomed to say her prayers, and had he not hung there a card with these words: "*A young man*, going into a far country to make a fortune, asks you to pray for his success and return." These words swept over Meta's heart as no music or painting or sculpture could have touched it, for they contained a rich group of ideas—love, sacred love, house-building love; love so deep that it prayed, and a love that was bound to come back to the presence of Meta. All the other fine arts were eclipsed the moment words began their eloquence.

But what kind of words are those which

make up this fine art? The air of earth is constantly disturbed by human voices. There is no scarcity of noisy prattlers in car and omnibus; no dearth of preaching men and women in pulpit; no dearth of sand-lot orators; no poverty of campaign speakers and law-makers; no famine of theological and biological, and chemical, and etymological, and paleographic, and medical talk; but, are these organized vowels and consonants when printed in a volume, the whole or parts of that uttered soul that is honored by being called Art? Evidently they are not the whole nor a part. While many, indeed most, of the great terms in use refuse to be closely defined, while no one can tell us what is poetry, what is eloquence, what is virtue, what is religion or what beauty may be, yet there can be made approximative analyses which will serve for everyday use amid a multitude which never hopes for a perfect comprehension of even its

dearest truths. A world which cannot define its God, or its life or death or heaven or hell, may well yield gracefully when anyone asks it, What is literature? or, What is poetry? Coleridge himself did not close up the debate over the term poetry. He passed over a wide field of labor and research, and taught mankind that such word-work as that of Job and Isaiah is not poetry, but it is the poetic; it is the raw material out of which poetry might be made. As a cotton boll is not muslin, nor calico, but stands as the prime cause, and as the field of flax is not a piece of linen, as the cotton-boll and the stock of flax wait for the manufacturer to come along, so the thoughts of Job and St. John and Ossian and Hugo are not poetry, but they are the material of the fabric in waiting for a manufacturer; and only he is the full and true poet who, in one soul, both grows the blue blossomed flax and spins and weaves the linen. In such defini-

tion the after ages would have found rest and faith had not such disturbers of sleep as John Ruskin come along to show that all the followers of Coleridge were exchanging the substance for the accident; were finding Minerva not in her heart and soul, but in her sandals, and scarf, and shield.

No one has defined eloquence. It is not very probable that the word “literature” will ever become so bounded and measured and mapped that at last all will say that they perceive the thing in its essence. The boundaries in the intellectual world are all dim. As no one can determine just when a domestic art becomes a fine art, just when a house-builder becomes an architect, just when a carpenter may be called an artist in wood-work, so in this matter of written truth or thought it is difficult to mark the place where a writer in his closet ceases to be a scribe and becomes a man of letters—an heir of this higher immor-

tality. The transition period is as obscure as that line the Calvinists used to sing of as running

“Between God’s mercy and His wrath.”

But, standing before a bough of apple blossoms, we can make general remarks about the coloring, although unable to tell where the pink or white absolutely comes or utterly goes away. We are perfectly composed in the belief that those blossoms are not black or green, or at all like unto the hue of the sun-flower or the flag. In many worlds beside the one seen by Darwin, we must confess to the fact of “missing links.” Between man and the ape there is a void; between literature and the common book there is a similar “aching void.”

One will utter all the truth one has, and as much as the world deserves, should one say that literature is that part of thought that is wrought out in the name of the beautiful. A

Blue-Book, an encyclopedia, a scientific treatise, a text book, a sectarian tract in religion or politics, is issued in the name of utility or fact or self interest; but a poem, like that of Homer, or an essay upon Milton or Dante or Cæsar from a Macaulay, a Taine or a Froude, is created in the name of beauty, and is a fragment in literature, just as a Corinthian capital is a fragment in art. When truth, in its forward flow, joins beauty, the two rivers make a new flood called "Letters." It is an Amazon of broad bosom, resembling the sea. But beauty is a sentiment, a feeling, and hence all literature is sentimental. Knowledge, science, religious dicta, are cold; literature is warm. It is the tropical zone—all else is arctic. Knowledge, in all its forms, is the marble in the quarry, or dragged upon sledges a little way from the primeval mud. Literature is the subsequent statue, full of all grace and snow-white in purity. Truth is the rude

tusk of the mammoth—letters the polished ivory, the *decus*, which Virgil says labor adds to the ivory :

Quale manus addunt ebori decus, aut ubi flavo
Argentum Pariusve lapis circumdatur auro.

Not necessarily, perhaps, but as an existing fact, almost all the decoration which is seen in this temple under contemplation is made up of emotion. In all the long journey from Homer to Shakspeare, those passing along that path must all the while laugh or smile or sigh or weep. The common book-maker can supply man with facts; the high, immortal word-weavers do not deal in facts, but in all the sad and happy experiences of the soul. Reading in the realm of this high art, we are like the travelers in the Canterbury Tales, we must be in the emotional business of riding along in a magnificent company, having set forth from a Tabard Inn, and having our faces set toward some a Becket tomb, or merry or holy place;

and, higher than the larks above the head,
whose song is up in the sky, must be the
heart-beats in our bosoms as we go.

“ Befelle that in that season on a day
In Southwork, at the Tabard as I lay,
Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage
At night was come into that hostelrie
Wel nine and twenty in a compaynie
Of Sundry folk.”

Thus our English literature set out, not from an Alexandrian library, but from a goodly company of sundry folk; not from intellectual analysis and discrimination, but from the loving and laughing and weeping heart. Out of such clear mountain rills, all the streams of letters have made up their sweeping floods. Homer’s “goodly company” did not assemble in a hotel but in a camp; and, instead of laughing along country roads, they sailed in ships, or marched in heavy columns, and by plume and shield and spear and chariot and by heroic struggle, made up the verse

we call Homer—a flowing stream of love and hate, joy or bitterness. But human history is all one page. All that high art called “letters” rises in sentiment, and, arrayed in such vesture, it dies if stripped of its array, as the oak dies if stripped of its foliage.

Look at the evidence of facts. Passing over the centuries which came and went before the Greeks, pause in that peninsula where there flashed forth a light which in our 19th century beams on quite undimmed. Select the first great work. Who wrote it? Did it issue from a mind full of learning and speculation and analysis? On the opposite, a poor blind man sang it along the streets. The book, Homer, is the exploits of the heart. Here Achilles and Agamemnon fought, but not over a question in science or politics, but over a piece of female beauty. Here Andromache and Hector kissed each other and their child, and parted. The infant boy

“Smiled silently, Andromache all bathed
In tears, stood by, and clinging to his hand
Addressed him * * * ‘Hast thou no pity then,
For this, thine infant son and wretched me ?’ ”

This Hector is soon dragged around the outer walls, fastened by leatheren thongs to the chariot of Achilles. In the *Odysssey*, Ulysses wanders in magic seas for twenty years; his son seeks him, his queen weeps.

What volume is this? We have come to Pindar—to harps and chariot races, and choruses and odes. All the splendor of the Olympic and Pythian games is lying in Pindar, just as the *Summer Night’s Dream* lies in the English dramatist. The nearest humanity will ever come to beholding those games which once entranced Greece will be when the eye shall read this poet, and in his rapid measure and rapid thought, find again the rolling chariot and see the dust-cloud and hear the shout.

Æschylus follows, with that form of passion

called Prometheus. Sophocles follows, leading by the hand the first ideal sister—a woman never before seen in art, a woman not even in the Bible—the almost sublime Antigone. Euripides follows, with that Medea, which still comes and goes on the stage as often as a Rachel is born with the genius that can grapple with such a creation. Sappho comes only to add to this torrent of passion. Being neither a statesman, nor a scholar, nor a scientist, but only a girl, she has been borne along twenty-five hundred years by the winds of sentiment. What this girl's own estimate of literary qualification really was, we may learn from her own verses, for in one of her poems it is seen at once that she makes education consist in a refined sensibility. In her highly-strung girlhood, she had, upon a certain day, been fated to walk with an untaught woman, and the deadness of the woman's mind and heart drove the poetess to her pen,

that she might unload her soul of its mingled hate and pity:

TO AN ILLITERATE WOMAN.

Unknown, unheeded shalt thou die,
And no memorial shall proclaim
That once beneath the upper sky
Thou hadst a being or a name.

Doomed o'er that dreary realm alone,
Shunned by all gentle shades to go,
No friend shall soothe, nor parent own
Thee! child of sloth! the Muses' foe!

For never to the Muses' bowers
Did'st thou with glowing heart repair,
Nor ever intertwine the flowers
That Fancy strews unnumbered there.

Thus, through Sappho are we taught that literature is an art, because its urns are all full of sentiment. She reveals the supreme power of emotion. Her own genius is that of sensibility, for in her eulogy upon the rose she is seen as with eyes full of tears, standing in her garden in Mitylene. Toward lover and

rose her feelings moved in the impetuosity of a storm.

Plato, that confessed prince of old thinkers, served as a poet long before he served as a philosopher. It looks as though his reflection had been shot into the world by the arrows of fancy, as Apollo comes in the beams of the sun. Much of his greatness took its rise in Mt. Helicon. Passion aroused the soul which afterward thought so deeply, and the reader has still his doubtful choice between the prose and the poetry of this greatest of the ancients. Great in music, and painting, and verse, and philosophy, the fathers called him a Christian, because his meaning was so hidden behind images that he was all things to all times. Like the mother of Æneas, he advanced in a concealing cloud.

The Latins repeat this phenomenon of their Attic companions, for the Latin authors which most charm the world are those who speak

from the manifold affections—Virgil and Horace and Ovid and Terence and Lucretius—all the most powerful of Roman names, but all they composed was written down at the command of love and hate, happiness and sorrow. It is a singular attribute of human nature that it would rather hear of the “wide-spreading beech” of Virgil than read the tables of the Roman law, and would rather cry out, “*Eureka! eureka!*” over a bunch of wild flowers than over the idea that the square of the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is equivalent to the sum of the squares of the other two sides. We all believe the utterances of geometry. We do not entertain any doubt over the assertion that if two straight lines intersect each other the angles which have their heads together will be equal. Upon the whole, men are glad that Pythagorus and Euclid discovered the equality of such quantities so located, but the same men prefer to see Æneas and Dido

in their *tete à tête* at Carthage, and prefer the fourth book of Virgil to any fourth book of geometric lore.

Having observed that ancient Rome was moved more by men of sentiment than by men of erudition, and that Virgil is more immortal in his verses than Numa Pompilius in his law, or Julius in his circle of the months, we may note that more recent Rome and Florence appealed again to that beauty which lays the foundation of all art. Perhaps that human nature which changes so readily its government and religion and language and costume will be found at last demanding changes in the essence of its literature. The past having made such a long and large offering of tears and smiles and pensiveness and wit and beauty, why should not the public reverse its order and say: "Give us the facts; give us information." Let us see. In the thirteenth century, when the intellectual world was lying

dead, stretching out like a black forest, where now and then a group of ascetic monks could be seen moving along in poverty, like a pack of hungry wolves crossing at midnight a field of ice—there, where language lay shattered and was neither the Latin of the past nor the Italian of the future, a beautiful girl lifted up her divine form slowly, and around her white forehead a lover came and wove a new language. Literature was raised from the dead by two lovers. No other kind of mortal had life to spare, nor the beauty that could endow an art. Dante and Beatrice warmed up a language and epoch by the glow of their own passion. Dante was the most fully awakened mind of his century, but his awakening was not that of only learning, but also of romance. Here the world's thought began to roll back to it, not, however, by the gate of information, but by the gate of sentiment. Intellectual life had been absent for a

thousand years. A night had reached out from the fourth century to the thirteenth, and now, when light begins to dawn, its nimbus is first seen about the brows of only two—two Florentine children. Where were the philosophers and the statesmen? Indeed, they were waiting for a fine art to come and wake their sluggish souls. As Homer arose in advance of the seven wise men and was compelled to sing and dance by their couches, and beat his castanets and sweep his whole hand over his harp before Wisdom and Learning would so much as turn their heavy heads on their pillows, so Dante and his maiden were compelled to pass through the long halls of the old intellectual caravanserai and tap with love-fingers on the doors before the giants of brain would know that the sun was up and was heralding a large day for the world. And after all that noise in the hall, the first men to awake were not the men of science and religion, but

the Raffaelles and the Angelos of art. This history all repeats itself in the more modern times. In English thought first came Chaucer. The romance which founded the Greek and Italian languages founded our great tongue. Chaucer came in the name of the beautiful—in the name of the beautiful alone. Man changes his government and his language and his fashions, but he always comes back to the fields and flowers and song, and to the adventures of the heart. Shakspeare followed with a continuation of human emotion. The world desiring to have a collection of great national books, said: "My gifted children, bring sentiment. Let others bring facts and make Blue Books and Statistics; you must bring pictures and music in words. '*Manibus date lilia plenis.*' Your thought and utterances must

" ' Come o'er my ear like the sweet south
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odor.' "

What a line of sentimentalists have followed

this Shakspeare! They reach out like Aurora-beams from Chaucer to Tennyson, while in the German plains we see Goethe and Schiller parallel rivers of dignified sensation.

Out of this infinite power of the heart it has come to pass that souls without great acquisition have risen to endless fame, and have composed works so amazing that men of books, inflamed by the aphorism that "knowledge is power," have attempted to find in a Lord Bacon an adequate source of Hamlet and Juliet. A recent writer says: "Are we to suppose that those plays sprang from the brain of one who was only a playwright? One who had only held horses and had poached for deer?" Of a truth we are, for much good has come from carpenters and playwrights and shepherds and railsplitters, and all that form of humanity, and much of this good has been of such a quality that the touch of a Lord Bacon would have taken away all the velvet

finish of the whole fabric. That Shakspeare stole many skeletons of plays is certain, but he did that in an age when authorship was not so glorious as the dramatic action. The question was not who could compose a play, but who could present it to the public. Shakspeare seized upon the common property of the stage, and when a drama did not suit his powerful judgment he re-fashioned it, and fortunately each amendment was a progress. There are no masses of knowledge visible in these plays, such that the giants of learning must be thought to have heaped up the Pelion and Ossa, for the real truth is that a common plowman of that period held all the law and gospel one may find in all these comedies and tragedies, for it is perfectly plain that in making up the religious element in such writers as Byron and Scott and Shakspeare, a little Scripture will go a long way. When, however, it comes to all that eloquence of the heart,

which we find in Romeo and Juliet and the Merchant of Venice, that William needed Lord Bacon no more than Burns needed help from Burke and Pitt while he was composing his Highland Mary. The thoughts springing up from the Misses Davidson and the Misses Carey, even the love songs of Sappho and the Infelicia of the humble Adah Menken, teach beyond doubt that the human mind enjoys two forms of greatness—the one acquisition, the other creation—and that while some men are made, others are born.

A fine art being therefore an industry which works in the beautiful, literature is a fine art, because it culls out and properly arranges and forms into certain wholes the attractive in thought. What painting attempts to express by color, what music would achieve with sound, it does by help of vowels and consonants; but it far surpasses its companions, because it can utter the mind and soul most

fully. But this virtue should not make it too vast to be an art. Instances have already been brought forward to show that very much of what the world calls literature, is made up of the record of sentiment. These books are all galleries of pictures, and the Sistine Chapel and Dante are similar human works, only the decorator of the chapel used literal paint; the decorator of the Divine Comedia used those better colors called verse and imagination and fancy. Macaulay was an artist; his essays and his histories are the works which remain from his chisel, or brush. Our best statue of John Bunyan is from the studio of Macaulay. In this art, we must therefore always expect that truth will be highly colored. We are never deeply impressed with the exact fact. The mind is a convex glass which magnifies each object. As Angelo made his Moses colossal, so the men and women in letters are either transformed or

belittled, until the mind becomes fully impressed with the virtues or vices which may attach to the personages.

PLINY THE YOUNGER.

PLINY THE YOUNGER.

Egotism is not an unmixed evil. It is necessary that each age should rear a few of those men who possess that self-admiration which mistakes private experience for the dearest object of universal history. The mistake is not very great after all, because when Montaigne talks most about himself he best writes the history of France. When any gifted egotist writes or speaks, it is as though his Age were whispering at the confessional secrets that were finally to be betrayed. These self-worshippers are less valuable in our age, because the current literature is so wide reaching and so copious that all things and events are caught as they come; but in all the previous periods a man who forced upon society a written picture of himself performed a most valuable service for those who

were to live in the remote future. This quality of self-appreciation as inherited and cultivated by the younger Pliny, secures for us now an inner history of classic Rome. The light falls chiefly upon the first century of this era, but although brightest then it reaches backward diminishing as the distance increases, but diffused over the entire Roman period.

Any one great or average mind must contain the essential attributes of its time and place, because the circumstances that created it must have been at work upon its contemporaries, making them into a close similitude. The poems of Horace imply an age that could read them; the orations of Cicero imply a myriad of citizens who used the same language, who were familiar with the themes and allusions and illustrations that were incorporated into the addresses of their orator.

Thus the egotism of one man becomes at last the picture of his empire.

Pliny states in his introductory note that having been frequently urged by Septicius to collect and publish a volume of his letters as written from time to time to friends, he now complies; but this request will not explain the numerousness of those letters, nor will it explain how it happened that of those letters Pliny performed the double office of writer and subject. It is probable that that soliciting friend was some mild and convenient relative or adviser; a person not wholly unknown in the passing century. We forgive both Pliny and Septicius; for the lapse of eighteen hundred years have turned the request and the compliance into a historical blessing.

Born in 61 of our era Pliny was in full fame and power from A. D. 80 to A. D. 110.

His letters include the reigns of Domitian, Nerva, and nine or ten years of Trajan's bet-

ter period. As he was admitted to the practice of the law when only about twenty, he was a mature scholar early in his life. Thus he gives his readers a sketch of about thirty years as he spent them, and inasmuch as he does not allude to any custom as though being an innovation, his landscape, mental and moral, widens into that of classic Rome.

His father having died when the son was an infant, the widow and son removed to Misenum to make their home with the uncle, Pliny the Elder. On August 24, A.D., 79, the uncle perished in the dust storm made by that eruption of Vesuvius which buried the two cities. This death brought to the young nephew the estate of his uncle. This property added to his own inheritance made for the lawyer a fortune of considerable magnitude.

The Roman lawyer could not honorably work for a remuneration. He was evolved from the old landlord, whose tenants and

slaves were his clients. He had to defend all his own subjects, one hundred or one thousand. Of course he could take no fee in his own family. The Roman lawyer was the successor of this old grandee and was above taking any direct reward. Pliny mentions with severe language two attorneys who had made a contract including a fee in money. The profession stood more upon its fame, the happiness of fame, as stood the profession of literature in the times of Dante and Milton. But the Roman law-practice lay in a period in which gifts of money were as common as love or friendship. It was not supposed that when the will of a rich man was read the estate would all go to relatives. All the near friends and boon companions were quite confident of being remembered. This was not only a result of warm friendship, but it became also a cause; for in all times as well

as in those of Rochefoucauld, gratitude is often a lively appreciation of favors that are to come. It is human to think well of those who are intending to bless us.

Sometimes in Rome when old, rich people were drawing near the close of life, the number of friends and the expressions of friendship became greatly multiplied around them, and many achieved in a small way what Regulus performed on a larger scale. Regulus possessed some form of civil power, and when old acquaintances were dying, this brazen magnate would pay them a visit and suggest that his love was such as to merit marked memory in a dying hour. Regulus boasted to Pliny that he had thus secured from his friends about sixty millions of sesterces (\$2,000,000) two millions of dollars.

But these cases of imposition were rare and leave untouched the honorable fact that every Roman heart was full of friendship and used

every beautiful form of expressing it. From those Latins came the aphorisms that "friendship can make riches more brilliant." *Amicitia facit res splendidiores*. Upon the friendship of his town or city each lawyer relied for what help he might expect beyond that found in his inheritance; but the result was that only those who inherited wealth embarked in that profession. It was much like the literary pursuit, more the result of taste and genius than the love of gold.

Pliny loved his profession as ardently as Virgil loved poetry or Galileo astronomy, or Humboldt nature, or Napolean war. He confesses his effort to keep Demosthenes and Cicero always in his mind, but he laments that while he could catch their form of rhetoric, he feared that few would ever live who could equal their sublime spirit. He thinks the best speech he ever made was a plea in behalf of a lady of rank who had been disin-

herited by her father. It was uttered before a Roman court of one hundred and eighty judges. To this great presence he says, you must add, lawyers, friends to such a quantity that the galleries were all crowded with listeners—"This speech I consider to be among my addresses the 'Ktesiphon' of all" (the greatest speech of Demosthenes having been in defense of Ktesiphon). This oration passed around among lawyers and friends as being a most elegant specimen of legal eloquence. Lawyers often read their address to some private audience long after it had been delivered in court.

Pliny's praise of other lawyers was very generous. His maxim was, that envy is always a confession of personal inferiority. He was lavish in applause for merit. He wrote to a friend of a delightful day in court—the pleasure having come from two young lawyers who had managed their first case and had

spoken with great elegance and force. He remained to congratulate them after the court had adjourned.

The literary industry of the age was very great. Pliny's uncle seemed to aspire to universal knowledge. He attempted to write down all about the world. A servant read to him even while he was taking his daily bath. This activity reappeared in the nephew. When Vesuvius sounded its alarm and rolled up its column of smoke and fire, the uncle made ready a ship that he might sail up to the mountain's base and offer help to any who might need it. The lad of eighteen refused to go along with his uncle, because he had some studies to make in a volume of Livy. Having taken a bath, he went to bed, and, when the trembling of the ground had become so violent that columns and buildings were tumbling on all sides, he thought it best to get up and dress; and,

then, while he and his mother were sitting out in the open air, he fell to work at his Livy again. A relative, who had just returned from Spain, ran along and intimated to the mother that she was excessively stupid to be sitting there with her son in peace, and that son even reading a book. The rebuke had no marked effect, for "*nihilo segnus ego intentus in librum*" — (none the less did I read on in my book). At last, in the awful darkness, he and his mother left the house, and, climbing up on the hillside that they might not be trampled to death by the horsemen or the panic stricken crowd, they sat in the cyclone of ashes and fire for perhaps twelve hours with no expression of fear or of complaint escaping the lips of mother or son.

Books outranked volcanos and earthquakes. The greatest object in that age was a great book, ten, twelve or fifteen hundred dollars being sometimes paid for a single volume.

How large a part of the whole population possessed an education is a datum difficult to be found. The per cent of illiteracy was probably very large, for, in an empire in which are found many grades of political rank, those inferences fail which would hold true in a republic. The law of averages will not apply to the scholarship of a despotism. But literary taste and the love of information reached out somewhat into the rural districts. It is mentioned in one of these letters that when the metropolitan reads an essay or delivers an oration he need not think only of the famous critics around him, for "*O quantum eruditorum.*"

"O, what a company of learned persons there are whom modesty or the love of retirement have kept away from fame! In remote Gaul I visited a friend, and with what purity did he express himself in Latin and Greek! It was difficult to note in which

language he seemed more at home. And how much he had read! He seemed a citizen of Athens, and not of a small village. Let me remind you, my friend, that as in the army we often find the bravest soldiers to be among those of humblest rank, so, under the plain village garb, do we find men of great intellectual merit." Books were, indeed, costly, but it is well known in our times that culture and true information depend more upon the greatness of books than upon the number of volumes. The average writer was not solemn as an undertaker on duty, but, so far as the classics knew how to be bright and cheerful, they lived up to their ability. Some melancholy philosophers found fault with our subject for writing verses of sentiment and little comedies. Pliny replies to these criticisms by saying that he claims manhood's natural right to laugh, act in comedy, and have and enjoy a large amount and variety

of amusement. He accuses the faultfinders of ignorance of the amount of levity there was in all the great Romans — Cicero, Hortensius, Brutus, the Cæsars (Julius, Augustus), Nerva and Tiberius. He confesses that there might be a fondness for humor that might injure letters and fame, but that it was quite safe to follow the well known great men who had often been busy in the lightest trifling. We are to suppose, therefore, that there was plenty of smile and laughter in that stately age, but that this amusing work by tongue and pen was permitted to perish like the bouquet which is composed for the hand or the bosom, to be the decoration of only an evening.

The common education, so far as to read and write, was imparted at home. The wife of Pliny, having in infancy lost her mother, was reared by her aunt. One of the lawyer's best and most egotistical epistles is addressed

to this aunt, thanking her for having educated so highly in heart and mind the girl who had at last became the wife. The lawyer expresses extreme delight in the fondness of his wife for books; and what must have exalted the dear creature most of all was her ability to adapt “My own poetry to her harp with no teacher but affection for me.” But he says that the aunt was herself “a model of every virtue.” “Accept, therefore, Hispulla, many thanks from us both — from her that you gave me to her; from me that you gave her to me, as though you had carefully selected each for the other.”

Schools and private classes existed, but among the upper families each home was a school house. Music, Latin and Greek were important branches, but to the course for the boys boxing, riding and swimming were added. The manly pursuits outranked the ornamental in theory, but, in fact, general

literature must have been the favorite study through all the times of the “Twelve Cæsars.”

The books that figured at the bath tub and during volcanoes and earthquakes were dominant everywhere. Both the Plinies took exercise in a chariot rather than on horseback or on foot, because in the chariot, while getting the fresh air and the exercise of motion, they could read or could write down thoughts. It is not difficult now to see this Roman lawyer going slowly along the lanes or wagon roads of some one of his country estates, his two or three horses abreast walking slowly under the care of a sleepy driver, the scholar and orator meanwhile noting what some great Greek or Roman had said in prose or poetry, politics or history. Even when the busy man attempted to relent and go hunting he always took with him tablet and style, that if he should catch no game he might bring home,

at least, a thought, a paragraph, or a poem. The uncle often took with him in the chariot a reporter who could record words rapidly; more rapidly, said Martial, than the tongue could utter them. Martial says, in one of his epigrams, that although the words ran rapidly, the hand was swifter, and often finished the sentence in advance of the tongue.

Pliny's whole life was that of a busy reader and writer. He longed for summer to come, that he might hasten away from Rome to find in some one of his estates more opportunity for composition and study. To a friend he described a day at Tuscum. He arose in summer with the daybreak. He did not then open the window shutters. He sat in the dark or paced the room for hours, because in the whole day no other time would come so favorable for meditation. He then threw open his shutters and called his reporter, to have recorded the new thoughts or arguments

of the hour. He walked in the garden if the morning was fair, or in the portico if the day was bad; and in these walks he continued to dictate to his clerk. After a light breakfast came the chariot ride and more reading. After dinner came rest; then, for the purpose of aiding digestion, he would recite aloud, distinctly and slowly, some Greek or Latin oration. An oration exercised the muscular system around the digestive organs. After sunset came the family circle, with some one reading to him and his wife and what friends might happen to call. Often there was music. Last of all, the whole family took a walk, and with them a few students, who were always extracting what they could from proximity to the great scholar and lawyer. A common habit was to render Latin into Greek, and Greek into Latin.

That literature was a wide spread passion may be inferred from the frequent occurrence

of readings given in the city residences in the gay season. Pliny often thus read an essay or a speech. He laments, in one letter, that he could not have reached his country place earlier than in May, but he felt bound by many friendships to remain in the city, and in discharging these obligations he had listened to an essay or a poem almost every evening in April.

He complains that quite a large number of the guests at those readings lounge around in the halls or move about; that others send spies up to the door to find how near the reader may be to the end of his observations or rhymes; that other persons, great in their own estimation at least, sit, indeed, and listen, but, like dummies, would not, for any consideration, by hand or lips, show any sign of delight; that he is justly indignant at people who will, from choice, spend a whole evening in an act of marked rudeness.

Under this passion for literature lay two causes: the happiness which books gave, and the confessed greatness of fame. Pliny spoke for all the great minds of his epoch when he said, "To me there is a joy or consolation in letters; a joyous day books will make more happy, and a sad day much less sad. In this time of my wife's sickness and in the peril of all my servants, and the death of some, I fly to my books as being the only refuge. They enable me to understand things better and the better to endure them."

Literature, like music, lies beyond the reach of man's measurement, but all can perceive that it was fully capable of becoming and continuing a source of happiness to many Greek and Latin generations.

What of this popularity the pursuit of daily happiness will not explain can be placed to the credit of the most extreme love of present and future admiration. An immor-

tality upon earth was the aim and the hope of the higher Roman mind. Ambition to be remembered after death appears as the greatest classic motive. The love of fame is avowed over and over in the letters of Pliny. Much, therefore, that seemed only personal vanity was really an enjoyment in advance of the heaven of renown. “Rejoice with me, Valerius, not on my own account, but because the Republic still prizes literature. Going lately to make an argument before the ‘Court of the Hundred,’ the crowd was so great that I could not get to my place without passing over the platform on which the judges sat. A young man, whose tunic was torn in the tumult, stood in front of me without any tunic on and listened to me, although I spoke seven hours. Let us feel that there will always be hearers and readers as long as there are persons worthy to be read after or heard.” Those persons are pitied who died

having left no monument of genius or good works. All the eminent men were full of this building up of self. When a citizen had conversed for a time with Tacitus, and, at last, ventured to ask him his name, the great historian said: "My dear sir, you ought to know the distinguished men of your city." The citizen replied: "I knew you were one of our great men, but I did not know whether you were Tacitus or Pliny." We may imagine that Tacitus was not wholly pleased with this way out of the dilemma, for a man might as well have been wholly ignorant as not to know the difference between Tacitus and Pliny—they being about as much alike as Daniel Webster and ex-President Hayes.

In his sensitiveness about his fame, Pliny begged Tacitus to inweave him, in some manner, into the coming "Annals" of Rome. Pliny says: "I predict, Cornelius Tacitus, that your histories will be immortal, and,

therefore, so much the more do I desire a place in them. But I do not ask you to make any deed of mine greater than it was; for history should never pass beyond the truth. To deeds honestly performed the simple truth suffices." "*Veritas sufficit.*"

Cicero, a hundred and fifty years before, had not been so easily satisfied. His letter is extant addressed to a local historian of note, and containing a request that that historian would turn aside from his plan of bringing down events in their order of time, a request that he would jump over some generations and issue soon a history of himself and the Republic in the times of Cataline. A few words from the long letter of the great orator will illustrate the passion which pulled at all those heart-strings. "It is my ambition to live forever in the praises of the future; but I do also desire the satisfaction in the present time of seeing myself as standing approved in

the authoritative records of such a gifted friend, and when a man has already transgressed thus the bounds of modesty it is vain for him to attempt to recede; so I push boldly onward, and express the hope that you will not confine yourself to the strict laws of history, but that you will give a greater latitude to your encomiums than possibly you may think that my actions may merit." To these fifteen hundred words of special pleading Cicero must have forgotten to add the request: Burn this letter. Montaigne says that by some wrath of Heaven the two requests lived, the histories perished.

This wonderful egotism, reaching over at least three centuries, is rendered much more tolerable by the reflection that fame was with those citizens, not that unmeaning self-conceit which often inflames a modern coxcomb or makes an ephemeral insect dance in the sunbeam of fashion, but it was often the yearn-

ing of sad men after some motive of life greater than that found in Horace's handful of dust. When Pliny mourns the death of a friend the tears are all without hope. Fame, coming before death and following after, acted as a substitute for a conscious existence beyond; and, for many a noble mind, indeed, for millions of persons in all, this glory, painted a gorgeous sunset, into whose colors the heart, slowly sinking, was willing to go down. The vanity of men over great deeds made such deeds more universal.

The villas of the Roman gentlemen were not summer resorts or winter resorts, but estates like those in England to-day. Pliny and his uncle and all these rusticating citizens were colossal farmers. Tenants and slaves did all the varied work in field and vineyard. Pliny's greatest estate was one hundred and fifty miles from the city. To go from one estate to another was a pleasure, because he

could read and observe and study in his chariot on the way. He objected to buying a farm adjoining one of his; he would rather have some leagues to intervene between farms, because the journeys between were desirable. The villa was only the master's house.

A long letter to a friend describes fully the estate at Tuscany, but when the reader reaches the end of the letter he has his mind full of broken details which no one now living could fit into a complete picture. There were a race course; walks leading to it, box-trees along the walk; a stone wall with ivy all over it; a covered portico of marble in which walks could be taken in bad weather; a laurel grove; a lawn sloping down to the river; a great many fountains playing here and there; brooks which ran half the time underground, half the distance above ground; a complicated dwelling house, having porticos

on different sides; dining rooms many, some indoors wholly; some with roof and columns only; one indoors, which was lined with marble to the ceiling, where the carved birds and leaves on the sides passed into painted birds and leaves overhead; a marble basin of running water, on the wide rim of which a lunch was often served, while the salt and other seasoning articles were held in silver or gold ships, or birds which floated on the water; bedchambers many, each one looking out toward a vineyard, or the river, or a mountain; bathrooms, in sets of three, that the bather could begin in the hot one and pass to the tepid one, and end his toilet in the cool one; over the bathrooms, a tennis court, large enough for different sets of players; outside, upon each wall and in each open sunny place, dwarf trees, trailing bear's foot and roses; the name of the architects, the head gardeners, and of Pliny himself,

being made in large letters of dwarf box along some walk to river or hill.

This magnificence was generations in growing; for like English or German castles, these villas remained in families while many cradles and graves came in turn. Pliny's wife was rich in her own name. He was as generous as he was wealthy. He gave to a young man for purchasing Knighthood, twelve thousand dollars; to a neighbor's daughter as a marriage gift, five thousand dollars, and, when her father died, leaving this daughter sole heir, the friend of her marriage day came back and gave up to her the mortgages he held against the estate; he gave a five thousand dollar farm to his nurse; to his native town Corunna he gave about seventy thousand dollars for a library, and for the support of any friendless children. When the grape crop was poor, one dry summer, he assembled his tenants

and reduced their rents ten per cent for that year.

In taste and in morals he passed above and beyond common generosity, and ceased to attend the Roman games. He had no criminal slaves,—what we call chain-gang slaves. He gave freedom to many good servants. He interceded in behalf of abused slaves. He was full of kindness to his wife, and he stood the still higher test of a most finished culture by being full of kindness to even his mother-in-law. To such an extreme degree did he carry this friendship for his wife's mother, that he wrote to a friend that her pocket-book always seemed to him one and the same as his own.

He spiritualized life and never alludes to articles of wearing apparel or to food or furniture, and would not have described his house had not some friend made a formal request for a letter upon his home and habits

at Tuscany. No indelicate term or allusion is to be found in all the writings of this perhaps typical member of the Roman bar.

What injured the typical Roman was not the absence of modern scientific inventions, for these must be reckoned the conveniences of the world rather than factors in its real merit. Livy's chariot, with two or three good slow-going horses, carried as good a passenger as is carried in the palace car; and it is well known that the telephone does not add anything to the culture of the person at either end of the wire. What detained that age and made it fall short of greater ideals was the absence of a constitutional government, and of a common people who were educated far enough to enable them to make the laws triumph over individual monsters. Of eleven emperors just before and up to the noble Hadrian, seven had been made the victims of assassination. No scholar,

lawyer or statesman could look upon life as secure. Juvenal said that among the noble old age was a miracle. Domitian was bloody and envious. The lower classes were safe; but each nobler mind had to betake itself to the woods, and leave Rome to those men who possessed the least of honor. The country seat was not only the most beautiful home for each statesman, but it was also the safest place in three years out of five. Pliny called upon a neighboring nobleman who had long lain on a sick bed. He said to Pliny, "I am clinging to life in the hope that Domitian may die first and permit me to live one day in free Rome." Some assassin, aided by the despot's own wife, gave the invalid his wish, and he died, looking out for a day upon the reign of the humane Nerva. Trajan followed in two years with a government as benignant as Roman soul could wish, but what civilization demands is permanency

of law and reason. The mind and heart cannot be tossed here and there between literature and murder. Trees must not be transplanted every spring. To grow a civilization demands a long reach of favorable years.

Appointed by Trajan, governor of Bithynia, Pliny came into contact with those Christians who were spreading abroad from some of the Palestine centers not far away. Their transgression of law lay not in their being Christians, but in their not being worshippers of the Roman gods; for the Druids and the sun-worshippers had been made the victims of the same common law that made essential the religious unity of the Roman state. Pliny found these Christians meeting for worship; and wrote to Trajan for special instructions what to do. The instructions which Trajan sent back were that: "You need not go out of your way to

look for these religious offenders. If they should be brought before you and the offense proved, they must be punished." It is probable that between the kindness of the emperor and the governor there was not much suffering among the disciples of the new faith.

Pliny was out upon the borders of Palestine not as a humane gentleman only, but as a Roman governor and as one who did not wish to see his empire add anything to its present distraction. The old law preventing all assemblages in the name of any cause hostile to his country was never absent from his mind. His relations, therefore, to those early Christians, were those of personal honor and must have been modified by his benevolence. The correspondence is interesting, but chiefly because some of those with whom Pliny conversed about their new Master must have seen and heard St. Paul,

for he had been dead only twenty-eight years. Thus is added a kind of realism to a period too much beclouded by ecclesiastical myths.

But had the Roman government been as just and uniform as that of the United States, still every Pliny and Tacitus would yet have revealed a difference from the present which may be expressed by the word quantity. In quality those noblest men would compare well with the leading men of our day ; but America surpasses old Rome in the quantity of thought, learning and grasp. The letters of Pliny are empty of many and very great themes. When asked by Tacitus to note down his experience in that day and night which destroyed the two cities, the elegant writer devotes only a few pages to an event which would have elicited a volume from any modern philosopher who could have beheld such a spectacle. The name of neither submerged city is mentioned, no estimate is made of the

loss of life. It is possible that the writer desired to confine himself severely to the one point how the uncle died, but it seems more probable that his mind was not fitted for delineating or appreciating the convulsions of nature. Had it been Pliny's own earthquake he would have given it more marked attention. The letter of the Roman taken along with the volume which has recently been published in England, with detailed accounts and maps, and pictures of the volcanic tumult of 1884, in the island of Krakatoa, illustrates the difference between the mind in the first century and the mind of the nineteenth. In the recent volume we see the ashes falling upon the decks of a ship two hundred miles away from the volcano; we note people listening to the volcanic guns that are thundering each minute, three or four hundred miles from their homes; we see the column of fire rising to the height of

seventeen miles; a tidal wave rolling landward sixty feet in height; we see a dust storm in which dust fell, in three hours, several inches in depth a hundred miles away from the angry mountain; a dust cloud which girdled the earth in thirteen days and for months made the skies of Europe and America glow in deep crimson for an hour after the sun had gone down. With Pliny such a zeal and enlargement of thought were impossible.

Away from natural phenomena that Latin age was true and impressive so far as it went, but it falls back of ours as much in the study of liberty of man and woman as in the discourse over natural phenomena, and as much in the broad survey of education, and the progress of all the people as in the study of the one blessing of freedom. Those men are all seen walking in noble paths, but the nobleness falls a little short of the modern

power in the same directions. In the quality of his nature Pliny was much like William Wirt, or Thomas Noon Talfourd, but he fell short in that power of pathos and of delineation of character and nature which belonged to these two members of modern professional life. Pliny had the elegance of Talfourd and the gentleness of Wirt, but without the power of expression that belonged to the American or the Englishman. The difference is not one of kind, but rather the difference between a song and a symphony, the difference between a tree and a forest.

The element most difficult of analysis in these Romans is that of religious belief,—the difficulty coming from their reticence. These scholars did not announce a creed. Here and there comes an allusion to the national gods, but it is impossible to learn how much of this allusion came from that known habit of art and thought, to use the common

opinions of the past or of the populace. In literature Pandora's box still figures, although no one now believes in either Pandora or the box. In classic Rome any man could express any opinion he might wish to express. Therefore, Lucretius was free to publish his poem which created the universe without the help of a deity. Cicero could have written against the gods had he so desired. It was only against organized opinion,—religious belief that created a society, like that of the Druids or the Christians, the law of "national unity" was directed; but while their laws granted liberty of individual thought, patriotic men like Cæsar, Cicero and Tacitus were not fond of making war upon the temples and altars of their country. It would not be far from the truth to assume that faith in the realism of the Pagan religion was quite dead in those high intellects, and that they were all living in an

interregnum between the dead old and the invisible new, and were bearing in silence and heroism the whole mystery of the situation.

As to the possession of happiness, these upper Roman families were as rich as the modern upper ranks. When a good emperor like Nerva or Trajan, or Augustus came from the sky, then the degree of felicity compared well with any now found along any of the marble avenues of the present time. But the lamentable thing is that this happiness did not in that early time touch so vast a multitude. Rome then governed eighty millions of persons, and thinking of this vast throng, the heart feels that homes like the villas of the Plinies and Virgils were too few to make the whole picture as honorable to the race as the home scenes in this passing epoch. That Latin home-life was beautiful, but within

reach of only a few. There was too great a preponderance of thorns over the roses.

Happiness is difficult of measurement ; but when one reads all about the Pliny fireside, notes the appreciation of the material beauty found in the villas, the walks, the flowers, the trees, the long slow rides in the rural road, recalls the appreciation of all spiritual objects, the books, the family readings, the eloquence of the lawyer, the essay-parties at the house, notes the profusion of kind words, remembers Pliny's wife as singing for him and accompanying her song with the lyre, or in time of court, sending messengers to the chambers to learn how her idolized husband may be prospering in some important pleadings, to bring back to her what the listeners are saying to each other about the points in his arguments, or about the degree of his eloquence, there remains to this meditating student of history little reason

for bestowing any of our nineteenth century pity upon Pliny the lawyer and Calpurnia his wife. Our age could offer little to their personal happiness, except the hope of a life after death.

In one particular it is to be feared that the higher young and old men of Rome surpassed the parallel class of this generation—in professional and literary enthusiasm. It does not seem that fame maintains its old power as a motive of life. A hunger for renown is not desirable, when with Cicero it asks a historian to paint exploits in colors richer than truth would warrant, but it is a misfortune of the present if its students and professional men are not anxious to be greatly esteemed while living, and honored when dead. The defect of the Romans was that they did not conceal their hunger. It was this want of concealment that created the egotism of nearly all the Latin scholars.

Perhaps the current period has reached that sagacity, which can conceal well the soul's literary aspirations. If so, all well. There are many emotions of each heart, which are for that heart alone; but when one marks the rise and triumph of new motives,—motives not in harmony with the highest intellectual career,—it may well be suspected that many modern students instead of concealing the ambition of a Pliny have utterly lost it. If so, the loss is great; for beyond doubt, the first thirty years of life ought to be swept over constantly by the health-giving, life-giving, purifying breeze of an honorable ambition.

It is wonderful what points of resemblance there are between the life of those upper Romans and the life of the eminent statesmen, lawyers and scholars who are now living in our nation. In no one of fifteen or sixteen Christian centuries can America

see so much of herself as she can see in classic Rome. From the third century to the eighteenth, religious persecution, cruelty, darkness, often fanaticism, held absolute sway. Not many modern hearts would love now in thought to spend a week with Augustine or Tertullian, with any of the pope Leos, not even with the stormy, rude Luther or with Sir Matthew Hale of witch memory, or with the high tempered dogmatic Milton, but could the New York bar or the Chicago bar be invited by Pliny under Trajan to spend a week at the villa of Tuscany or Laurentium, the invitation might well be accepted at once, for the whole week would be full to overflowing of all those delightful harmonies which constitute the charm of society. But the invitation can not be issued. The happiness at those villas came to an end long ago. Between those bright days and our bright days, lie sleeping eighteen hundred years.

OLYMPIA MORATA.

OLYMPIA MORATA.

In that regeneration of Europe which reached its highest activity in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the town of Ferrara must be placed in moral influence along with Florence, Geneva, and even mighty Rome. It lay near the Po River, but upon one of the branches of that stream. It was about forty miles from Venice, about as far from Ravenna, a hundred and fifty from Rome. It was a thousand years old when the sixteenth century opened. In its last few generations, it had built the usual number of palaces, churches, theatres, and galleries, and had added a university for the pursuit of such forms of learning as the world then possessed. Here was built the famous church which will echo spoken words sixteen times.

A celebrated school of painting, located in this walled town, helped to pour out that stream of beauty which covered Europe before the wave of thought in general had begun to advance.

Its rulers, the Este family, held sway through the transition period, and, having caught from the Medici house the spreading taste for classic art and classic literature, they made Ferrara a second Florence. They created Ariosto and claimed Tasso as a semi-equivalent for the names of Dante and Angelo. This famous ducal seat seemed like a detached part of the mighty Rome of Angelo; and now in its ruins it recalls the Rome of the earlier ages. To its renowned university, men having reputation of learning were summoned to be seated as wise professors; students journeyed thither as to a second Athens; thither even Calvin went under a false name, that he might enjoy for a

brief period the wisdom of the lecturers and the air of Italian liberty. In those days the population of Ferrara was almost one hundred thousand. Ariosto's tomb is here, from whose statue the crown of iron laurel leaves was melted away by lightning a hundred years ago. Byron moralized over this blasted wreath :

“The lightning rent from Ariosto’s bust
The Iron crown of laurel’s mimicked leaves,
Nor was the ominous element unjust,
For the true laurel leaf which glory weaves
Is of the tree no bolt of thunder cleaves.”

Among the university professors was one Fulvio Peregrino Morato. As though Ferrara had not a future fame adequate to his merit, he had brought with him the honor of having been born at Mantua, thus having his cradle with Virgil and his later home with Tasso and Ariosto. His lectures upon Dante and Petrarch helped to awaken the slumbering world and helped to secure for the

lecturer entrance into the palaces of not only the Este family, but of Venice. His wife Lucretia was, if history be true, the perfect partner of such a leader in the work of the *Renaissance*. Their daughter, Olympia Morata, destined to become such a joy of the house and an honor to Italy, was born in the year 1526. Her biographers have left in the Latin language such a full account of her character and her works that we are enabled now to see with almost sufficient clearness the life of a girl and woman who lived almost three hundred and fifty years ago.

Olympia is seen standing, a beautiful and gifted being in the border of a remarkable group. Angelo was fifty years old, Luther over forty, Vittoria Colonna was in the height of fame and power. Each one of these great names standing for a system of planets of which the great personage was a

central sun, attracting, warming, and illuminating; they all made a great encompassment for a gifted, sensitive mind. Olympia was not a result any more than a cause. She was not made by Luther or Calvin. Ferrara was far away from the Germany of Luther and from the Geneva of Calvin. We must not imagine the new era of literature and art to have begun with any one man; or at any one point. The advance was general, reaching from Florence to Wittenberg, affecting letters and art in Italy and religion in Germany. The study of this gifted child is valuable, because in her became visible the real agencies which were at work in her times at the resurrection of the human mind and the reconstruction of society. Light is let in upon that transformation scene when we read that while still in childhood's confines, Olympia studied the Latin and Greek tongues, spoke them at last with the same

ease as that of the great Dante and Ariosto. Her biographer says she inspired her heart with the thoughts and imagery of the classic world. At the age of twelve she could speak with equal facility the languages of Dante, Virgil, and Homer. Thus she held the keys to three great temples of wisdom, and reminds us from what sources the *Renaissance* drew its sweeping flood.

For reasons unknown to any now living, the Greek and Roman literature became a most marvelous depository of wisdom, elegance, logic and ornament. It was many sided. It was lofty in morals, broad, almost free in politics, powerful in logic, rich in imagination and charming in vocalization. The breadth and depth of the Greek thought are the wonder of even this late epoch in human development. While the former states of the East could point to some one author and that one a dreamer or perhaps a hermit,

Greece could have called together at Athens an army of brilliant sons in which throng there could have been seen poets, dramatists, historians, moralists, mathematicians, scientists, orators and metaphysical philosophers. Adding to this astonishing roll-call, the intellectual splendor of the Latin race and you will be able to appreciate the vantage ground of a sixteenth century girl who could read Homer and Xenophon and Plato, and could then vary her activity by taking up Virgil, Tacitus and Cicero. The letters of Greece and Rome were colored through and through by the greatness and the liberty of man as man.

Greece as a nation was destroyed by Rome; and Rome fell at last a victim of her luxury and sin; but the literatures of these two giants of history contained all that was good and imperishable in their careers. The period or the nation that should open again,

should love again those two buried tongues, would begin at once to emerge from shadow, and to escape from the ignominy of being called "A Dark Age."

The *Renaissance* was therefore only the exhuming of thought and power where Greece and Rome had hidden them away under the *debris* of their armies, amphitheatres, dining-rooms and wild orgies of Bacchus. The literature of those two classic states contained the culture and acquisition of the human race up to the date of their decline and fall. Had this literature been lost along with the crowns of Pericles and Cæsar, we should now be in dark ages indeed, and in order to find light we should be busy now over the mental and moral tasks performed by some age back of perhaps Greece. The literature of the classic saves for us the labor of several thousands of years.

The re-illumination of Europe began thus

when the eclipse of the classic literature passed away and permitted that old sun to shine down upon Florence and Wittenberg and Ferrara as it had shone down upon Athens. When we perceive this young woman of Ferrara preferring hard study to idleness, preferring Plato to the legends of contemporary saints, we reach some conception of the causes of a new art, new intellect, and a new Europe.

The Duke of Este had a daughter of fine mental endowments, and as she was now of the age when study was the duty of the hour, the daughter of a poor professor was taken into the palace to be the teacher and companion of the princess Anna, daughter of the duke. Thus Olympia passed into the higher circle of society ; and while teacher of a princess, became also a pupil of royalty, able to drink in new ideas and new impulse from the court life.

If one would paint this picture to the life, one must recall once more into being two girls in a palace; the teacher five years older than the pupil; the former as gifted as Aspasia, the latter the bright child of a great family; one must see them almost inseparable in friendship; wise, pure, modest, ambitious; one must paint them as passing hours together over the speeches of Demosthenes and the story of Virgil; must see them delivering extempore orations, each in turn being audience or orator; one must see them happy in these forms of duty, following not any task-master but the new and powerful passion of the heart; and then will one possess not only a portraiture of two minds blessed of heaven but one will have an outline picture of a movement called the *Renaissance*.

It sheds some light upon the peculiar liberty and customs of Ferrara that, in such a university town, this young Olympia

should have delivered public lectures; and upon so grave themes as the Scepticism of Cicero, and the Genius of the Stoical Philosophy.

The introduction to one of her lectures on the great Roman orator and moralist will convey some idea of the mental power and delicate taste of this early female occupant of the desk or platform: “I know well the rare benevolence of all those who will now listen to me; and yet the natural timidity of my youth, joined with a sense of being unequal to the theme, fills me with a just fear. I tremble and seem without voice; like the old rhetorician who was about to speak at the altar of Lyon. You have commanded me to speak. I shall obey, for no victim is more acceptable to God than the one that makes of self a willing offering. But I come to my task as an inexperienced artist approaches his piece of marble. There are some tunes

so full of time and harmony that even when played upon a poor instrument they retain all their sweetness. Such are the words and teachings of my author. In passing through my lips they will lose nothing of their grace and majesty."

The sixteenth century girl must have been only fourteen or fifteen years of age when she delivered these wise lectures upon Cicero; for at the age of fourteen she had published a defense of that orator against the charge of irreligion. It was her wonderful ability at this early date which led a scholar of the place to write to her: "The daughters of your tender age find happiness in culling here and there the flowers of springtime and in making of them many colored crowns, but thou passest by such blossoms of a day; and in the gardens of the Muses gatherest garlands which not only will never fade, but which as though by a divine privilege will

grow richer with the passing years." The fifteen year daughter of the present would be pardoned if her heart should be filled with pride should great scholars deliberately address to her such encomiums as this:

"Thy face is not only beautiful and thy grace charming, oh, thou young girl, but thou has been elevated to the court by thy virtues; thou art at once in the circle of royal children and in the society of the Muses, Happy the princess who has such a companion! Happy the parents of such a child that pronounce thy beautiful name within their doors! Blessed the husband who shall ever win thy hand! As for me, full of the pains of disease, my sorrows are made less by the kind words of so distinguished a personage."

And yet this young woman was not a phenomenon, not an anomaly. Her value comes from the fact that she stands for an epoch. She

must have been indeed above the multitude of the women of the time. So was Webster, so was Washington, above the men of their age. We must remember that while Olympia was reading her lectures upon Cicero, Vittoria Colonna was almost as great in Florence as Madame de Stael became in France; Margaret of Navarre was entertaining her court and Italy by her wit, wisdom and beauty, if not by any marked loftiness of character; it must be kept in mind that the Medici family had founded an academy or college of Plato in Florence; that there was a glow in the sky, which was caught up and deepened by the half-inspired face of Olympia Morata. She is rendered the more interesting by the fact that while she was as accomplished and beautiful as Aspasia, as lofty as Lady Jane Grey, her contemporary, she is now a mirror of an age as it was passing from darkness into light. As the Virgil she loved had

taught her to mark the beauty of the moon when emerging from a cloud, we can see in this transparent mind the intellectual world emerging from the deepest of shadows and into impressive beauty.

In the regeneration of Europe the material part of Greek culture was the first to return to mankind. Beauty very naturally comes in the inverted order of its spirituality ; the least divine coming first. Could we recall the whole human race and interrogate its now absent soul, we should find that architecture came in advance of music ; that a sensuous religion came long before any such message of worship as Christ brought had been acceptable to mankind ; that literature, the most spiritual of the arts, came last when it came, and died at the first impact of vice upon the public sentiment. In harmony with this *a priori* assumption, the arts of architecture, statuary and painting began to

reappear in the fifteenth and early part of the sixteenth centuries, under the Raphaels and Angelos; then came, by slow steps, the intellectual forms of beauty to reach their amazing height in the seventeenth century. Olympia Morata came and lived in the early morning of that time which was to carry society over from the beautiful of Angelo to the beautiful of Shakespeare and Fenelon, and to the delicate beauty of Beethoven and Mozart.

Music came even more slowly than literature, because while the latter is the greater art in its scope and utility, music is the more delicate and ethereal. It lagged behind its sister arts because it had to wait for the human mind to rise to its pathos and general refinement. So amazing is the delicacy and divineness of this form of beauty, that it is chiefly used in the decoration of heaven. Like immortality itself, it seems always above

us, and seems to lift us away from the terrestrial, and to change us into the inhabitants of all space and of eternity.

When Palestrina gave music a new impulse, and made the sixteenth century a fountain of a new and grand estimate of voice and instrument, he simply found one more large channel for the flow of that beautiful which had reached a great excellence in the classic states, and was pouring into the new era through the two literatures. Greece did not teach the world music; she simply added to the delicacy of the human spirit until it asked for this measureless form of pleasure.

In 1543, when our interesting subject was seventeen years old, an event occurred which discloses to us a world busy with a progress, and shows the classic literature as a partial reason of the progress. Pope Paul III. made a visit to the powerful Duke of Este. Beyond doubt the excursion was one of business as

well as of pleasure. The philosophy of Martin Luther had created much disaffection in the Church, and was liable to cause much more. Ferrara was a free district and city, and rather more fond of Greek and Latin than it was of the tenets of the current theology. Aside from these matters, the coming of the pope was a large social event. He would come with a brilliant retinue. He would come in the name of a great throne and in the name of the celebrated Ferrara and its old ducal fame. Before the pope was permitted to make a triumphal march through the streets, he was met in the environs by the Duke of Este, and escorted to the suburban palace. Here, says the writer, were all the beauties art could add to nature. From the palace porch, as from a gallery, the pope looked down to the river Po. In the foreground was a prairie of flowers; fountains of water, which threw many jets in the air,

sent their spray to the flowers, and back fell their heavy masses of water into basins of marble. The palace was itself wonderful in its porches, columns, galleries of art. Further away were groves, avenues, innumerable birds, animals, domestic and foreign, tame and wild. The royal guest confessed himself amazed at the beauty and the magnificence. But it is when evening has come and all the illustrious company of the pope has joined the Este family in the famous palace, that the striking feature of the visit unveils itself to our gaze. The Este family did not discuss Luther and Calvin, nor plan an inquisition for the benefit of his holiness, but they treated their sacred guests to a Latin comedy—"The Brothers," by Terence. No wonder Calvin felt safe and at home in Ferrara. Where the comedy of life laughs and laughs, there a heretic may feel perfectly secure.

In that evening's diversion, Princess Anna took the part of the "Young Lover"; the princess Lucrece the prologue, Leona, "The Very Young Daughter"; the prince, Alphonse, the part of "The Young Man"; his brother Louis the part of "The Slave." From what many persons now living know about private theatricals, we can account for the absence of Olympia from the scene in front of the curtain, by assuming that she was in the property rooms helping the Este children array themselves with the vestments and faces needed for "lover and maiden" and "big villain and slave." The pope went to Ferrara to find orthodoxy and found a Latin comedy.

Such was an evening's entertainment offered a sacred pope more than three hundred years ago. While the wonder to us is that Paul III. could have gone away from such an evening to establish the inquisition for sup-

pressing new ideas, the amazement is atoned for by the fact that Olympia Morata and her father, and Vittoria Colonna and their groups of friends, accepted exile rather than give up their right and the human right to a perfect liberty of opinion. From the mode of passing the evening, we can infer their aversion to iron-like creeds.

In these days this young woman held no well defined religious opinions. So far as she was theological, she sympathized with the glittering generalities of the classics and not with the adjacent teachers of religion. Her French biographer says: "Her enthusiasm over antiquity became an idolatry and badly prepared her intellect for the mysteries of the doctrines of grace. She admired more the wisdom of Homer and Plato than the *foolishness* of Saint Paul." The beliefs of the ancient philosophers as presented in the admirable language of Cicero appeared to her

to be the forerunners of all Christian doctrine, while the dream of Scipio was all the revelation she cherished of the immortal life. It filled all the chambers of her imagination.

How widespread may have been this classic rationalism in this first quarter of the sixteenth century cannot now be determined, but in this girl of Ferrara we are logically compelled to see not simply herself, but that environment which could produce such a character. Her father, her mother, her classic teacher, her pupil, the Princess Anna of Este, her patrons, the Duke and Duchess of Este, were so fully at one with her in all studies, lectures, books and dramas, that we seem bound to infer at least a comparative unity of religious belief and unbelief. The popular demand for the classics which compelled this diffident student to lecture upon Cicero in a university town, makes it seem certain that the university of Ferrara was

what would have been called by the Puritans a “hot-bed of paganism and human vanity.” The Este dukedom, then perhaps six hundred years old, had never been decidedly for or against the dominant church; it had cast itself toward the pope at Rome, or toward some potentate at Milan or Venice, according to the temporary considerations that were offered by the persons seeking alliances. At this particular date the Duchess of Este was the daughter of the King of France; her husband was Hercules II., a great patron of all the ancient languages and arts. Renee, the duchess, was turned somewhat away from Rome by her friendship with John Calvin. So far, therefore, as there was any religious character in Ferrara, in its palaces and university, it looked to three compass points, Luther, the pope, and Cicero, and apparently without any violent preference in any direction.

It is evidently a mistake to assume that what is called the Reformation, was wholly a religious movement, or a religious result. It was as much a university tumult as a Lutheran idea. Protestantism represents only that part of the commotion which branched off into a new form of church government and worship. Within the Roman Church of that day there is to be seen rolling along the same ball of reform. When we look into the Holy Church and perceive the classic bias of the orators and scholars of the seventeenth century, we must conclude that a new life, a new taste and a new elegance have sprung up from some source common to Germany and France and Italy; but this common source cannot be found in Luther. We go back, theretore, to Homer and Virgil, Plato and Tacitus. Luther was himself the result of the power and freedom of the classic mind reappearing in Germany, a river of

thought emerging like an Alpheus from a long journey under-ground. Luther was himself borne along on the classic wave.

The Latin language was separating into Italian, French, Spanish and German; but although Dante had glorified the Italian tongue, and Luther was popularizing the German among the upper class, the Latin was still the dominant form of literature and of dignified speech. It died hard—it never died; it was translated like Elijah to other realms.

Mark the quality of the great French writers. Racine came with the play of *Andromache*, thus showing his affiliation to the Greek period; Corneille appeared with his great play of *Medea*; with his *Horace* and *Cinna*, with his drama of *Pompey*; with his close imitations of Terence and Plautus; Boileau came with lectures on poetry and eloquence taken almost bodily from the

Greek of Longinus; while lastly came Fénélon with his Adventures of Telemachus, the son of Ulysses. Instances these fully able to show that Luther was one form or branch of a cause greater than himself. Greece and Rome held the mental power of many former centuries, of all former periods, and we must conclude the sixteenth century to have been the time and place of a new outbreak of this old flame. Olympia Morata spoke and composed in three different languages, Greek, Latin and Italian. There were found twenty-eight long letters from her pen, letters addressed to persons of eminence. Of these, one is Greek, two Italian, twenty-five Latin; thus showing us that her age was hovering between the past and the future and still loved the Latin literature twelve times as much as it loved the Italian, a fact which does not imply the inferiority of any modern tongue, but which points out to us one of the sources

of that commotion which in one place became Protestantism, in another a new Romanism, in another form a new architecture, but which was everywhere a new birth into a better condition. Protestantism was only one branch of the tree of Greece, another branch was a better Romanism, another branch was beauty—another literature and deeper learning.

This golden mouthed Olympia sprung upon the period after her death, the question, even then a “vexed one,” whether woman was in her proper sphere when she was thus devoted to learning and to the inculcation of truths? A writer whom Jules Bonnet calls an old writer, expresses his opinion that “Women of the higher rank—queens, princesses and other great dames should study the books and tongues of their epoch; but that persons who are to follow the lower paths of being would better follow things

more in harmony with their rusticity; also would he warn away from theological inquiries even these dames of rank, because the wisdom of these divine things pertains to bishops, rectors and doctors."

One reason assigned for the high education of queens, duchesses and princesses, rests in the fact that the children of these are to be rulers and statesmen, and should derive from their mothers a rich language and the first lessons in eloquence, as Cornelia made her sons speak well and much in her presence. Whoever this writer may have been, he did not live in Ferrara in the times of Olympia, for that poor girl studied her Greek and Latin while she was in the humblest condition, and found no discord in youth between helping her mother in the humble house, and reading by a lamp not yet touched by the wand of the regeneration.

We who now study this page of history

have passed away from the question whether all women should be educated; but we have passed into a second form of the *quæstio vexata*—Whether woman should be the political equal of man? Whether some future age will laugh at our doubts as we smile at the “old writer” who felt that only ladies of rank should pursue branches of study, remains to be seen by those who shall live after us. Knowledge is all relative, the reply to one question becomes the basis of a new ignorance.

The career of Olympia Morata and of the age of which she was such an adequate type, might well invite us to think of those two dead languages which flowed along through the fifteen Christian centuries, carrying an immense wealth from the ancient world over to the coming dispensation. The inquiry whether the study of those two tongues may now be discontinued or made optional in the

schools of high order, does not affect the fame of usefulness they have already won in the civilization of our era. More than any other art, more than all other arts, the literature of a nation contains the most of its merit. The architecture, the statuary, the painting, the physical theories of the classic states, are a small inheritance compared with what has come to us through those languages. In those words lie political and social ideas; almost every high truth of morals, the liberty and equality of men, toleration of opinion, the deep method and thought of the philosopher, the resistless argument of the orator, the greatest precision of language, the thrilling interest of the drama, the wealth of fancy and imagination treasured up in poetry. Those tongues are a procession of wonderful minds and souls, a procession containing Homer, Pericles, Virgil, Julius Cæsar, and

many lofty ones whose names alone would consume the hours with a glorious roll-call.

If the Latin and Greek languages can be called dead, they did not grow silent until toward the close of the sixteenth century. They followed the marching millions as sublimely as the pillars of cloud and fire hovered near that older race which set out to seek liberty and enlightenment. As Rome had gathered into herself all the world's laws, philosophies, gold and works of art, and then compelled all the modern nations to start upon their westward exodus from her seven-hilled city; so the Greek and Latin tongues with equal grandeur, but with higher honor erected long ago a sublime arch of triumph made of marble indeed, and carved all over with illustrious names, but covered also with vines and roses — power and beauty — and then to all the arts and branches of learning, and to Christianity herself they said: “Pass

onward toward your destinies through this elaborate gateway. It was made for you. It will then stand forever a monument of the great exodus."

What should be the treatment those depositories of human excellence should receive from the present army of students is an inquiry too large to be discussed here; but we can be devoutly thankful that Olympia Morata and the women and men who in Italy, France, Germany and England, cherished some aspirations after knowledge and culture could repair to such mines of gold, and dig up so many of the treasures needed by the human race. Those tongues awakened taste, they taught breadth of logic, they induced in a superstitious age a useful amount of skepticism, they revealed the varied power of the human mind, they made the modern languages possible, in a brief period, they

clothed the young sixteenth century with the divine raiment of a mighty past.

But they did not wholly create the new era, but partly creating it, they partly inspired it to a development of its own genius. As that is the best charity which can enable poor men to help themselves, so the best service Rome and Greece could perform for the Christian era, was to awaken in this new era its own slumbering spirit. This it did, and did well. Greek art did not remain stationary. The columns remained in substance, but they could sustain a vaulted roof or could be made to blend with a pointed window and a groined ceiling. Greek ornamentalations passed from the simple into the manifold. The Greek music began in the sixteenth century to be almost lost in the richness of church tones, and in the madrigals of the heart. Then songs began to exhibit four or five or six parts. The Greek

lyre was gradually merging into the piano, the mere time keeping upon the early harp was swelling out into Beethoven's symphonies.

These are a few of the reflections which arise as we read the life of Olympia Morata. Her own name, the name of her father, Fulvius Perigrinus, the name of her patron, Duke Hercules, of her pupil, Anna, the name of Vittoria Colonna, the name of Angelo, of Leo X., assure us that we find her on the final border of the Latin world as it was receding, on the border of the new world as it was rapidly coming.

Olympia was compelled at last to accept of a form of the Christian faith. The Inquisition had risen into terrific power. It was to sift the wheat from the chaff, and garnering the wheat, it was to burn the chaff with unquenchable fire. Olympia preferred to be included in the chaff, and espoused the Re-

formed religion of Luther. She escaped burning by becoming an exile; and with her last years full of many forms of sorrow, she died in Schweinfurt, at the early age of twenty-eight. She died of consumption, saying to the last: “I am happy, entirely happy.”

The title page of her works, as published in Latin, in 1562, reads thus: “Of Olympia Fulvia Morata, a most learned and divine woman, the orations, dialogues, poems, letters in Latin and Greek along with the praises of great scholars.”

In Schweinfurt there is still to be seen a house with this inscription chiseled, by order of the government, in one of its stones, “Humble et pauvre maison, mais non sans gloire: elle fut habitee par Olympia Morata.” (Humble and poor house, but not without glory: it was inhabited by Olympia Morata.)

She was confessed in her day to be beauti-

ful. Could we in our time secure an image of her in snow-white marble, a good inscription to be placed upon the pedestal by modern hands, would evidently be: *La Fille de la Renaissance.*



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 016 256 130 3